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THE UZBEKISTAN-KYRGYZSTAN BORDER: INSTITUTIONAL LEGITIMACY AND REGIONAL STABILITY

by

Adam W. Drexler

June 2017

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Examining the political and social consequences of coercive border enforcement, this thesis hypothesizes that unilateral border hardening erodes institutional legitimacy and undermines regional stability. Relying on a case study of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border in Central Asia's Ferghana Valley, the thesis finds that border hardening is likely to change local perceptions of the border, diminish its overall institutional legitimacy, and weaken regional stability. Border institutions depend on a mixture of willing obedience and coercion by the state to obtain social compliance. Coercive and illegitimate means of border enforcement may have unintended consequences, undermining perceptions of legitimacy and leading to a logic of escalation of border hardening measures. This may in turn necessitate increasing levels of coercive border enforcement in order to achieve social compliance. Perceptions of border legitimacy influence the extent to which individuals voluntarily comply with border rules. Methods of border hardening are nearly always regarded as illegitimate and coercive when they adversely affect the local population. Policy-makers and military leaders must move beyond simple assumptions about borders as barriers in order to balance short- and long-term factors of security, strengthen a border's institutional legitimacy, and promote regional stability.

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THE UZBEKISTAN-KYRGYZSTAN BORDER: INSTITUTIONAL LEGITIMACY AND REGIONAL STABILITY

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ABSTRACT

Examining the political and social consequences of coercive border enforcement, this thesis hypothesizes that unilateral border hardening erodes institutional legitimacy and undermines regional stability. Relying on a case study of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border in Central Asia's Ferghana Valley, the thesis finds that border hardening is likely to change local perceptions of the border, diminish its overall institutional legitimacy, and weaken regional stability. Border institutions depend on a mixture of willing obedience and coercion by the state to obtain social compliance. Coercive and illegitimate means of border enforcement may have unintended consequences, undermining perceptions of legitimacy and leading to a logic of escalation of border hardening measures. This may in turn necessitate increasing levels of coercive border enforcement in order to achieve social compliance. Perceptions of border legitimacy influence the extent to which individuals voluntarily comply with border rules. Methods of border hardening are nearly always regarded as illegitimate and coercive when they adversely affect the local population. Policy-makers and military leaders must move beyond simple assumptions about borders as barriers in order to balance short- and long-term factors of security, strengthen a border's institutional legitimacy, and promote regional stability.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION

Do hardened borders enhance or undermine regional stability? While economic or security concerns may drive unilateral hardening of borders, little is known about the long-term impact of this policy in light of popular support and local perceptions of the border. An underlying theme of this thesis is the role of unintended consequences on the legitimacy of the border institution. The opening question considers whether the policy of hardening—while intended to improve security—undermines regional stability by weakening the institutional legitimacy of the border. Under specific circumstances and in a particular historical context, the hardening of a border may drive local perceptions of illegitimacy because it contradicts local expectations for the meaning and purpose of the political border. The border is not only perceived as illegitimate but also complicates the everyday life of borderland people. This perception of illegitimacy—which is often associated with feelings or beliefs that include annoyance, unfairness, suspicion, corruption, and fear—may also shape local behavior and influence whether people willingly obey the border rules or comply merely owing to the state's coercive use of force.

The relationship between border hardening and the weakening of institutional legitimacy is especially evident in the Ferghana Valley, where borders have historically been open and porous. This thesis considers border hardening and local perceptions in relation to institutional legitimacy, which is an element of regional stability. Beyond the historical circumstances of border making in the Ferghana Valley is the contemporary global debate on the meaning and legitimacy of borders to provide national security and enhance regional stability. These issues are geopolitical in nature, while drawing insights from other disciplines, including sociology, political science, behavioral science, and history. Ultimately, this thesis proposes a new theory and research agenda—albeit narrowly focused on a specific time and place—for understanding border hardening in light of the institutional legitimacy of the border and regional stability.

While states have long debated the function of their borders, security fears since the 1990s—especially since the terrorist attacks against the United States in September 2001—have resulted in increased border hardening, a deliberate policy response intended to counter international security threats and thereby enhance stability. The term "border hardening" refers to state efforts to demarcate and enforce a territorial border. Border hardening is a border making process, whereby a border becomes more difficult to penetrate socially, politically, or economically. Hardening restricts the movement of people and materials across a border through physical materialization (e.g., fences, walls, and limited gates) or coercive enforcement (as with armed patrols, criminalization of illegal border crossing, restrictive checkpoints, and visa programs). While hardening policies vary across time and place, this process has been directed more recently at countering non-traditional security threats, such as terrorism, that threaten regional stability.

As a concept, the political, social, economic, and cultural dynamics of a region affect stability both internally and among states. "Defined as the orderly and peaceful operation of the balance-of-power system," according to American political theorist G. John Ikenberry, stability "requires the ability of states to recognize and respond to shifting power distributions."[1] Consistent with most rationalist, realist, and pragmatist approaches to international politics, the pursuit of stability involves the balance of legitimacy with security and prosperity.[2] Without denying the importance of economic and military stability, the focus of this thesis is decidedly on elements of political and social stability. Border hardening is usually aimed at immediate security concerns, and policy-makers and scholars lack consensus on whether it is constructive for future prosperity and stability. As a result of its complex borders as well as its geopolitical importance to Russia, China, the United States, and the European Union, Central Asia's Ferghana Valley is a particularly useful case for examining the connection between border hardening and regional stability.

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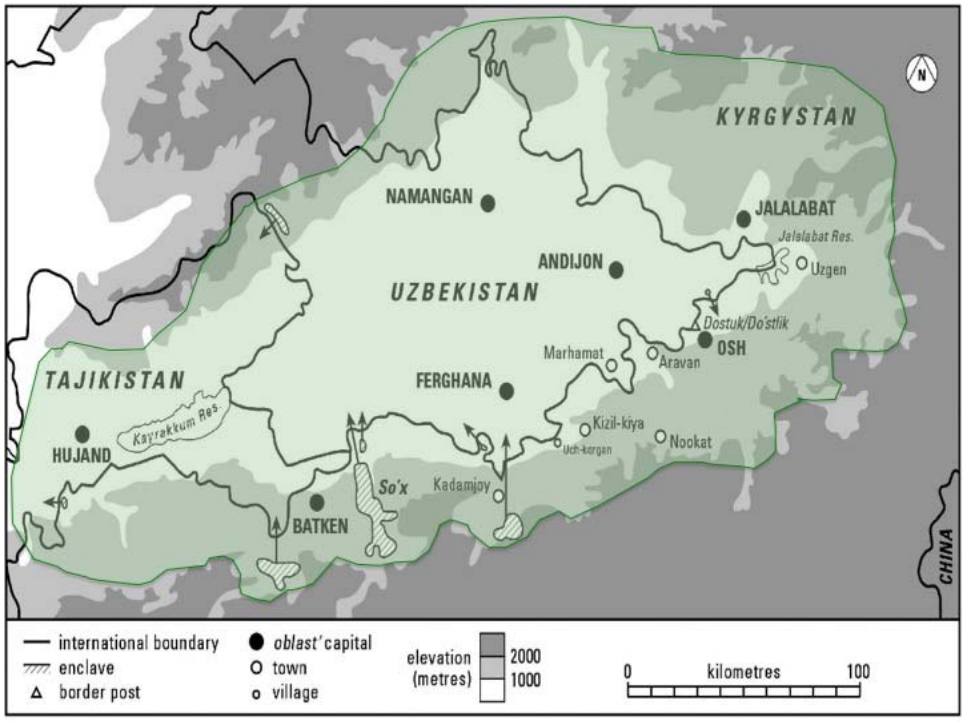
[1] G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars* (Princeton: University Press, 2001), 46.

[2] Ibid.

Border scholars and pundits have often thrown up their hands at the complex and squiggly lines representing state borders in the Ferghana Valley, retreating sometimes in their explanations to Stalin's divide and rule policies or to their impression that someone was drawing lines on a map while drunk.[3] Moreover, security experts have assumed that the irregular and porous borders shown in Figure 1 would promote regional instability.



The complicated international border between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan includes numerous enclaves and border posts. The Ferghana Valley is outlined in green.

Figure 1. Map of the Ferghana Valley.[4]

[3] For examples of different characterizations of the Ferghana Valley as historically laden with problems, see Edward Storurton, "Kyrgyzstan: Stalin's Deadly Legacy," *Guardian*, 20 June 2010, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/jun/20/kyrgyzstan-stalins-deadly-legacy; "Stalin's Harvest," *Economist*, 17 June 2010, http://www.economist.com/node/16377083?story_id=16377083; "Enclaves in Central Asia: The Post-imperial Chessboard" (Banyan blog), 2 April 2014, http://www.economist.com/blogs/banyan/2014/04/enclaves-central-asia; and Farkhod Tolipov, "Ad-hoc peace or ad-hoc war: micro-geopolitics of Central Asia and the Caucasus," CACI, 2 June 2016, https://www.cacianalyst.org/publications/analytical-articles/item/13367-ad-hoc-peace-or-ad-hoc-war-micro-geopolitics-of-central-asia-and-the-caucasus.html.

[4] Adapted from Nick Megoran, "On Researching 'Ethnic Conflict': Epistemology, Politics, and a Central Asian Boundary Dispute," *Europe-Asia Studies* 59, no. 2 (2007): 254, http://www.jstor.org/stable/20451348; green outline added for further definition.

Despite popular descriptions as "a hotbed of destabilization,"[5] "a tinderbox for violence,"[6] "a knot of difficult problems,"[7] and "a Pandora's Box of border disputes,"[8] the Ferghana Valley has witnessed twenty-five years of relative stability since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991.[9] During most of the Soviet era and immediately following independence, international borders in the Ferghana Valley were relatively porous and open. Border hardening increased in 1999 following terrorist attacks in the Uzbek capital of Tashkent, and it was amplified further in 2000 with Uzbekistan's unilateral building of a fence along its border with Kyrgyzstan.

This thesis seeks insight into the effect of border hardening on regional stability. Unilateral hardening of the international border between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan interjected a new dynamic in the region's previously open and porous borders.[10] Consequently, localized conflict and tensions have increased along the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border since independence, but especially since 2000. Adapting concepts of legitimacy from multiple disciplines that were originally developed to explain legitimacy and authority for political institutions, this thesis examines the border between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan since independence in 1991, through a period of border

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5 Igor Rotar, "Will the Ferghana Valley Become a Hotbed of Destabilization in Central Asia?," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 9 (180): Jamestown Foundation, Washington, DC, 3 October 2012, http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=39924&cHash=768b895149248bff881e96958af06c6d#.V9HsN00whpg.

6 Charles Recknagel, "Ferghana Valley: A Tinderbox For Violence," *Radio Free Europe*, 17 June 2010, http://www.rferl.org/content/Why_Is_The_Ferghana_Valley_A_Tinderbox_For_Violence/2074849.html; "Factbox: Ethnic Tinderbox of South Kyrgyzstan," Reuters, 14 May 2010, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-kyrgyzstan-unrest-south-idUSTRE64D47H20100514.

7 David Trilling, "Border Violence Broadens Tension in Ferghana," *EurasiaNet*, 31 October 2010, http://www.eurasianet.org/node/62271.

8 International Crisis Group, "Central Asia: Border Disputes and Conflict Potential," *ICG Asia Report* no. 33, 4 April 2002, http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/031F4E484F8E6EEFC1256B950040E33F-icg-casia-04apr.pdf.

9 This statement about the relative stability in the Ferghana Valley does not imply that there is positive peace but rather that, despite underlying structural and performance-based problems, the region has yet to erupt in cross-border war.

10 Nick Megoran, "The Critical Geopolitics of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan Ferghana Valley Boundary Dispute, 1999–2000," *Political Geography* 23, no. 6 (2004): 623.

hardening that began in 1999, until 2009.[11] The primary research question is: How has border hardening between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan from 1991 to 2009 affected the institutional legitimacy of the border? Specifically, the focus of the analysis is on how border hardening changes local perceptions of the border, including local perceptions of legitimacy and authority, and therefore improved or undermined prospects for regional stability.

B. SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH QUESTION

This thesis investigates an ongoing debate of great importance for international politics: the security and stability consequences of border hardening. It does so by assessing border hardening and the prospects for stability in the Ferghana Valley. It also discusses basic assumptions related to regional stability, security, and border hardening. Scholars and analysts generally agree that stability depends on multiple factors related to sources of conflict as well as cooperation in the region. Many scholars assume also that border hardening supports regional stability when used to counter non-traditional security threats such as terrorism. Framing a border as an institution, this thesis analyzes the subjective forms of border legitimacy and obedience in relation to local perceptions and social behavior. While scholarly research often focuses on the short-term performance

[11] The analysis and information cutoff date of 2009 was selected not only to sharpen the historical focus on the years prior to the beginning of border hardening (1999-2000) and the short decade following border hardening was accepted practice, but because of two violent conflicts in Osh, Kyrgyzstan: the first in 1990 and the second in 2010. These events mark two of the most violent conflicts that occurred along the border between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan in the span of two decades and share remarkable similarities in their underlying causes. While this thesis does not investigate the causes of either of these two events directly, it seeks insight into the border dynamics between these two events and the potential that border hardening further changed the role of political institutions in the Ferghana Valley. The first event in 1990 preceded the collapse of the Soviet Union and national independence for the three nations in the Ferghana Valley; the second event in 2010 followed local and national crises in the Kyrgyzstan government; the underlying spark for both events, according to several acclaimed specialists in the region, was political instability. For greater explanation of these two events, which is beyond the scope of this thesis, see Nick Megoran, Elmira Satybaldieva, David Lewis, and John Heathershaw, "Evaluating Peacebuilding Interventions in Southern Kyrgyzstan," SIPRI–OSF, Open Society Foundations, Policy Brief, June 2014, https://www.staff.ncl.ac.uk/nick.megoran/pdf/policy%20brief%20sipri.pdf.

and effectiveness of border hardening,[12] few analysts have considered how the means of state enforcement affect the subjective foundations of the border's authority and legitimacy.

While borders are a dominant feature of everyday life in the Ferghana Valley, the disagreements concern how borders contribute to security and affect prospects for regional stability. Border making is easily understood as a political process, but unilateral state enforcement of borders through hardening also has economic and social effects that sometimes appear to be in tension with immediate security concerns. These political, economic, and social effects of border hardening are related to the perceptions of legitimacy of the border and the willingness of people in the borderland to observe the border.

Policy-makers and military leaders may also benefit from a greater appreciation of border dynamics, the processes of border hardening, and specific aspects of the Ferghana Valley. At the heart of Central Asia, the Ferghana Valley is strategically important to Russia, China, Turkey, the European Union, and the United States; each is interested in the region for its own political, economic, and security reasons. While borders regularly serve security functions for the state, including in military operations, this narrow focus limits appreciation for how border policies affect issues of legitimacy and respect for the border as an institution. Policy-makers and military leaders must also ask when, how, and to what extent border hardening is effective—either alone or in coordination with other security methods—in safeguarding against security threats. While policy and military doctrine focus on the short-term goals of securing or regulating the border, this thesis examines the political, economic, and social consequences of border hardening in relation to institutional legitimacy and regional stability. Furthermore, this

[12] For analysis of reasons for building walls and barriers, see David B. Carter and Paul Poast, "Why Do States Build Walls? Political Economy, Security, and Border Stability," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 61, no. 2 (2017): 239–70, doi:10.1177/0022002715596776. For analysis on border hardening and security performance, see Elisabeth Vallet, *Borders, Fences and Walls: State of Insecurity?* (New York: Routledge, 2016); Sylvia Longmire, *Border Insecurity: Why Big Money, Fences, and Drones Aren't Making Us Safer* (New York City: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Peter Andreas, *Border Games: Policing the U.S.-Mexico Divide*, 2nd ed. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009); Pauletta Otis and Joseph C. Bebel, "Borders and Boundaries: Drawing Lines Which Keep the Peace," *International Peacekeeping* 6, no. 3 (1999): 31–53, doi: 10.1080/13533319908413784.

thesis contributes to a growing body of interdisciplinary literature in security studies, geopolitics, the social sciences, and the humanities that considers prospects for regional stability in relation to borders, institutions, social behavior, and security policies.

C. POTENTIAL EXPLANATIONS

While satisfactory answers to complicated questions must look beyond simple explanations, short-term gains in state security must also be weighed against the long-term costs for a region's overall stability. The impact of border hardening between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan on regional stability in the Ferghana Valley is complicated. Increased border hardening—an instrumental means of coercive enforcement by the state—may weaken the legitimacy of the border, resulting in decreased subjective respect for the border. The relationship of border hardening, institutional legitimacy, social behavior, and regional stability probably depends to a significant extent on state enforcement of borders primarily through instrumental coercion. With border hardening, the subjective willingness to obey the border decreases, the institutional legitimacy of the border weakens, and regional stability is threatened. The broader assessment of this thesis is that border hardening may undermine regional stability in certain contexts. Suggesting a new theoretical framework for understanding border hardening with concepts of institutional legitimacy, this thesis also suggests a research agenda to guide future multidisciplinary studies on political and social borders.

1. Border Hardening and Regional Stability.

This study hypothesizes that border hardening between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan has weakened the institutional legitimacy of the border by changing social perceptions and diminishing willing obedience of the border's authority, thereby undermining regional stability in the Ferghana Valley. This proposed theory involves identifying the long-term (and unintended) consequences of border hardening that extend beyond the immediate performance and effectiveness of hardened borders. The consequences involve the theoretical and practical dynamics of borders, as well as elements of social obedience in relation to authority and institutional legitimacy. Key

factors in how a border contributes to long-term regional stability include the nature of border enforcement and the local perceptions of the border.

Such reasoning does not deny that border hardening may have led to improved regional security in the short term for the Ferghana Valley. In fact, border hardening between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan may have actually improved regional security in the Ferghana Valley by reducing cross-border illegal activity, "fixing" an ambiguous and porous border, and increasing state security against non-traditional threats common to the region such as terrorism. This assessment is consistent with a global border norm promoting delineated and demarcated borders, as well as with the logic that walls and fences help to keep out people that are regarded as dangerous.

According to an initial assessment of the literature, a multitude of factors influence security in the Ferghana Valley, including local borderland dynamics, national border policies, and social and political resiliency, as well as the prevalence of non-traditional security threats. Various programs intended to decrease conflict and improve security—on the local, national, and international level—assess the factors of instability in relation to the effectiveness of border policies and practices. Despite the aforementioned reasoning, there is some disagreement on whether border hardening reduces cross-border illegal activity and increases state security against non-traditional threats.[13] While some border enforcement efforts produce immediate successes, assessments of long-term payoffs are even more mixed than judgments about the short-term benefits of border hardening. Some evidence from other borderlands suggests that border hardening may adversely affect the political, economic, and social life of a region, especially when administered unilaterally along a border. The following section presents several basic assumptions regarding border institutions, legitimacy, and regional stability.

[13] For a critical perspective on security and everyday life in hardened borderlands, see Alena Pfoser, "Between Security and Mobility: Negotiating a Hardening Border Regime in the Russian-Estonian Borderland," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 41, no. 10 (2015): 1684–1702, doi: 10.1080/1369183X.2015.1015408; also, Aija Lulle, "Revitalizing Borders: Memory, Mobility and Materiality in a Latvian-Russian Border Region," *Culture Unbound: Journal of Current Cultural Research* 8, no. 1 (2016): 43–61, doi: 10.3384/cu.2000.1525.168143.

2. Basic Assumptions for Legitimacy and Regional Stability Border Analysis

Prior to exploring the reasoning behind the proposed theory, this section establishes several basic assumptions and introduces the framework for authority and institutional legitimacy. First, a territorial border is an institution formed through political and social processes rather than arising from purely organic circumstances, such as geographic or environmental factors. A border is not merely accepted or immediately dominant in the political or social landscape; this means that local, national, and regional agents do not respect or acknowledge a border simply because the border is there on a cartographer's map. As with other institutions, borders have rules enforced by the state. Agents—including individuals at the local, state, or regional levels—either honor or disregard a border. Additionally, every state intends to gain either willing obedience or social compliance with the rules of the border. In its purest form, subjective obedience implies an individual's willingness to accept the rightful authority of the border institution, whereas the mere compliance of an individual is possible even with forms of illegitimate state coercion.

This thesis distinguishes between legitimate forms of institutional authority and illegitimate means of obtaining compliance. Functionally, a border manages or restricts the flow of people and goods either through legitimate institutional authority or illegitimate coercion. Instrumental methods of border enforcement may be legal, but perceived as illegitimate and normatively unjust. When an institution is legitimate, subjective obedience to the border is rooted in a combination of charismatic, traditional, and rational-legal authority in accordance with Max Weber's framework for political and social behavior. Illegitimate means of enforcement demand compliance with the border either through forms of state coercion or interest.[14]

[14] On coercion or interest, also referred to as material payoff, see Stephen E. Hanson, *Post-Imperial Democracies: Ideology and Party Formation in Third Republic France, Weimar Germany, and Post-Soviet Russia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), specifically in Chapter 1, "Weberian Methodological Individualism," 19; for a discussion on institutional authority in terms of coercion, interest, and belief in legitimacy, see Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*, 5th printing (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 50.

Legitimate authority—and, to a lesser extent, illegitimate instrumental forms of enforcement—do not conclusively lead to willing obedience or compliance with the border; rather, there is an increase in the probability that the population will observe the border.[15] Criminal or otherwise nefarious elements will attempt to circumvent a border, ignoring institutional rules, regardless of the means of enforcement or social perceptions of the border's authority. The difference in the border's institutional legitimacy—whether or not a state is almost entirely dependent on illegitimate coercive means of enforcement—is an important factor in social behavior related to the long-term stability of a functioning border. Individuals are more likely to respect and obey the rules of a border when the population subjectively perceives the border as established by a legitimate authority—that is, right and just according to a combination of the three Weberian "ideal types" of authority.[16] If a border is perceived as illegitimate—illegal, unjustified, or not right—then the state must resort to enforcement through coercion or interest.[17] A border merely enforced and lacking the social perception of legitimacy is more institutionally fragile than one perceived as legitimate.

In some cases, compliance with the border depends on whether the state adequately coerces the population through force or other material instruments (i.e., border hardening). As soon as the state loses its will or ability to coerce the population, compliance with the border decreases and the legitimacy of the institution falters. Therefore, a border perceived as legitimate by individuals in the local borderland and society at large is more likely to be acknowledged and obeyed in the long-term. Furthermore, borders legitimized through traditional and rational-legal forms of authority are likely to be more institutionally stable and enduring than borders based on charismatic appeals or borders enforced by purely illegitimate coercive methods of enforcement. In other words, different perceptions of border legitimacy in the borderlands between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan affect social acknowledgement of the border: whether individuals are more likely to obey, comply, ignore, or defy. Traditional

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[15] Hanson, *Post-Imperial Democracies*, 19.

[16] Hanson, "Russia, Ukraine, and the Borders of Europe," 2.

[17] Hanson, *Post-Imperial Democracies*, 19.

and rational-legal forms of authority gain more willing obedience, while coercion and corrupt forms of interest (e.g., illegal material incentives) garner only compliance and are more likely to be ignored, challenged, or overturned in the future.

Border hardening between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan has restricted the flow of people and goods in the Ferghana Valley, in some locations dramatically, thus affecting everyday life in the borderlands. Evidence is scarce, however, on how perceptions of border legitimacy affect security and regional stability. As the border is enforced through instrumental means of coercion—including hardening, securitization, and militarization—those living in the borderlands may increasingly perceive the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border as illegitimate. As the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border loses local and regional perceptions of legitimacy, increasingly coercive means of enforcement may be required to influence social behavior and obtain compliance with border rules. The use of border hardening to counter extrinsic threats, such as terrorism and drug smuggling, may therefore ultimately threaten regional stability when state enforcement creates hardships on people in their everyday lives and erodes the institutional legitimacy of the border.

D. RESEARCH DESIGN

Elaborating on existing border studies, geopolitical analysis, and sociology theories, this thesis analyzes how borders are related to questions of stability. More specifically, it asks how border hardening between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan has affected institutional and regional stability in the Ferghana Valley through the process of increased or decreased legitimation of the border. Applying a sociological framework based on institutional legitimacy to the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border, this thesis seeks to better explain the prospects for institutional stability resulting from unilateral border hardening in light of security concerns. This thesis reviews the literature related to borders, border hardening, and regional stability; describes the security concerns and processes of border hardening in the Ferghana Valley; and provides insight into longer term effects of border hardening on stability.

This thesis uses a basic correlational analytic framework to investigate the effects of border hardening on regional stability since Uzbekistan's independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. Correlational analysis implies not only that causality is "ambiguous" in the strictest sense of social science methodology,[18] but also–as historian John Lewis Gaddis has argued—that variables are neither independent nor dependent but always interconnected and interdependent when dealing with human affairs.[19] Applying a theory of legitimacy to a specific case-study of the Ferghana Valley, this thesis attempts to take stock of the current scholarly approaches that address border hardening, social behavior, and stability, as well as to provide insight for political and military leaders about how stability is based on "contingent, not categorical, causation."[20]

This thesis seeks a more holistic approach than a simple cause-and-effect analysis. Drawing on historical and sociological methods, this thesis demonstrates that stability is not simply a matter of specific factors of conflict, but that "everything is linked to everything else" within a system.[21] In other words, "everything is interdependent."[22] Structure, processes, and organization are at least as relevant as a combination of traditionally discussed factors of conflict. The other aspect of this more historically inclined approach is the "preference for parsimony in consequences, but not causes."[23] Specifically, there are multiple causes not only for the border hardening but also for instability in the Ferghana Valley. The significance of border hardening, however, is determined by its subsequent consequences that affect regional stability, as well as by its prominence in contemporary policy debates regarding security.

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[18] See Harry T. Reis, *Handbook of Research Methods in Social and Personality Psychology*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 680, and broadly, Blair T. Johnson and Alice H. Eagly, Chapter 26, "Meta-analysis of Research in Social and Personality Psychology."

[19] John Lewis Gaddis, *The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 91–109.

[20] Ibid., 64.

[21] See Albert-László Barabási, *Linked: How Everything Is Connected to Everything Else and What It Means for Business, Science, and Everyday Life* (New York: Plume, 2003), 7.

[22] Gaddis, *Landscape of History*, 148. The difference between political scientists and historians in terms of variables and levels of complexity is elaborated by the term "endogeneity" in Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, *Bridges and Boundaries: Historians, Political Scientists, and the Study of International Relations, BCSIA Studies in International Security* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), 56.

[23] Gaddis, *Landscape of History*, 105–106.

Since the purpose of this analysis is explanatory, the method depends on a "particular generalization" of theory applied to a specific case study rather than a "general particularization" of a case study to demonstrate a theory.[24] Building on multiple arguments and assumptions from border theory, this thesis adapts Stephen Hanson's neo-Weberian framework of authority and institutional legitimacy and applies it to border hardening. This combination of theoretical presumptions and explanations of the historical border hardening process in the Ferghana Valley provides insight to the relationship between border hardening, perceptions of institutional legitimacy, and long-term prospects for stability.

While Weber saw "the central dilemma of politics" as "turning raw power into legitimate authority,"[25] this thesis reverses the process by looking at an example of legitimate authority undermined through the use of raw state power at the border. A state has the traditional and rational-legal authority to harden its border; but when hardening is undertaken unilaterally, principally through means of coercion, the border's legitimacy may be eroded and weakened. Hardening along the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border is a process, while the subjective perception of legitimacy is the mediator; and the relative degree of stability in the Ferghana Valley is the consequence.[26]

E. THESIS OVERVIEW AND CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter II reviews border literature, including a survey of existing explanations for instability in the Ferghana Valley and overall border theory. Chapter III considers borders as an institution, the legitimacy of borders, and border hardening. Chapter IV provides a concise historical account of Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border hardening from 1991 until 2009, contextualized by the Western "danger narrative" and regional security concerns in the Ferghana Valley, and assesses local perceptions of the border in response to hardening. Chapter V proposes a legitimacy framework for the Uzbekistan–

[24] See Gaddis, *Landscape of History*, for general discussion between social science and historical methods, specifically 106 for quoted text.

[25] Ikenberry, *After Victory*, 17.

[26] For an explanation of mediator variables, see Reis, *Handbook of Research Methods in Social and Personality Psychology*, 519, 522.

Kyrgyzstan border, and synthesizes the impact of border hardening on the long-term prospects for regional stability in the Ferghana Valley. Chapter VI concludes with recommendations for future research on border hardening and institutional legitimacy.

II. BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW

What does the literature say about the Ferghana Valley, its security concerns, and more generally, related concepts within border studies, such as border hardening? This chapter surveys the literature on two primary subjects: first, existing analyses of the Ferghana Valley, including conventional explanations of its security concerns; second, relevant concepts from border theory, including definitions and core concepts. Scholarship on the stability of the Ferghana Valley ranges from alarmist literature to more nuanced and informed. This thesis critically investigates the conventional wisdom that border hardening addresses security concerns and improves regional stability.

A. THE FERGHANA VALLEY: A SHORT BACKGROUND

> Besides its beauty and abundant natural endowments, nothing about the Ferghana Valley is simple.
>
> —S. Frederick Starr[27]

The geographic context of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border is the backdrop to many of the more immediate events related to border hardening and stability in the Ferghana Valley. Located in the heart of Central Asia and "surrounded by mountains on all sides,"[28] the Ferghana Valley is one of the most agriculturally fruitful and densely populated areas of Eurasia,[29] where the Naryn and Kara Rivers meet to form the great Syr Darya River. The entangled and disputed borders of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan within the Ferghana Valley—described by Sally Cummings as "awkward, either porous or potentially irredentist"—mark this post-Soviet territory. The length of more than 1,099 kilometers[30] does not begin to accurately illustrate the Uzbekistan–

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[27] S. Frederick Starr, introduction to *Ferghana Valley: The Heart of Central Asia*, edited by S. Frederick Starr, Baktybek Beshimov, Inomjon I. Bobokulov, and P. D Shozimov (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2011), ix.

[28] Abdukakhor Saidov, "The Ferghana Valley: The Pre-Colonial Legacy," in *Ferghana Valley*, 3.

[29] Starr, introduction to *Ferghana Valley*, i.

[30] Yessai Nikoyan, "Uzbekistan: Logistics Capacity Assessment," World Food Program, October 2006, 3, http://www.logcluster.org/sites/default/files/documents/wfp-lca-uzbekistan.

Kyrgyzstan border's overall complexity. The borderlands of the Ferghana Valley are more like a tangle of yarn or a "chessboard" than a simple line.[31]

Figure 2 depicts where ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks live throughout the Ferghana Valley, sometimes in enclave communities and as minorities in neighboring states detached from their ethnic homelands.[32] Ethnic Uzbeks are a significantly large minority in the urban populations of Jalalabad and Osh in Kyrgyzstan as well as the Uzbekistan enclave of Sokh, which is surrounded by Kyrgyz territory as shown in Figure 2. Ethnic Uzbeks are a majority in the Uzbekistan enclave of Shakhimardan, which is also surrounded by Kyrgyz territory.[33] Enclave residents have limited mobility because of border hardening measures—such as fences, checkpoints, and closures, as well as road restrictions—that frustrate travel among the enclaves, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan.[34]

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[31] Central Asia was notably described as a chessboard under a different context by Zbigniew Brzezinski in "A Geostrategy for Eurasia," *Foreign Affairs*, 1 October 1997, 50–64, accessed 1 September 2016, http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/10FD87847697D098?p=AWNB. For references to the contemporary entangled borders of the Ferghana Valley, see Madeleine Reeves, "Fixing the Border: On the Affective Life of the State in Southern Kyrgyzstan," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 29, no. 5 (2011): 911–912, doi: 10.1068/d18610; Madeleine Reeves, "Materialising State Space: 'Creeping Migration' and Territorial Integrity in Southern Kyrgyzstan," *Europe-Asia Studies* 61, no. 7 (2009): 1288, doi: 10.1080/09668130903068814; D. T. Ak-Sai, "Enclaves in Central Asia: The Post-imperial Chessboard," *The Economist*, 1 April 2014, http://www.economist.com/node/21599963.

[32] Cummings, *Understanding Central Asia*, 41.

[33] See Rashid Gabdulhakov, "Geographical Enclaves of the Fergana Valley: Do Good Fences Make Good Neighbors?," *Central Asia Security Policy Briefs* no. 14, OSCE Academy in Bishkek, http://osce-academy.net/upload/Policy_briefs/Policy_Brief_14.pdf.

[34] See Shirin Akiner, *Kyrgyzstan 2010: Conflict and Context, Silk Road Paper, July 2016*, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute and Silk Road Studies Program, Johns Hopkins University-SAIS (Washington, DC), 100; Khamidov, Alisher, "Fergana Valley: Stringent Border Measures Fuelling Tension in Enclaves," *EurasiaNet*, 12 August 2009, http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insightb/articles/eav081309.shtml.

Map of ethnicities in Kyrgyzstan shows distribution of Kyrgyz, Uzbek majorities, Uzbek minorities, and "other" nationalities. Kyrgyzstan is depicted as green; both Sokh and Shakhimardan enclaves are identified.

Figure 2. Ethnicity Map of the Ferghana Valley.[35]

Elsewhere, and especially in borderlands of the Ferghana Valley, distinctions between ethnicities are sometimes blurred through inter-marriages in lengthy family histories.[36] While Uzbekistan controls the majority of the grazing and farming land, water and power lie in Kyrgyzstan territory.[37] Multiple social, economic, and political

[35] Adapted from Andrew R. Bond and Natalie R. Koch, "Interethnic Tensions in Kyrgyzstan: A Political Geographic Perspective," *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 51, no. 4 (2010), 543, doi: 10.2747/1539-7216.51.4.531; additional map locations labeled with information from Necati Polat, *Boundary Issues in Central Asia* (Ardsley, NY: Transnational, 2002), 50.

[36] On the communal aspect of marriages, see Aksana Ismailbekova, "Coping Strategies: Public Avoidance, Migration, and Marriage in the Aftermath of the Osh Conflict, Fergana Valley," *Nationalities Papers* 41, no. 1 (2013): 109–127, doi: 10.1080/00905992.2012.748736. On the inter-ethnic aspect of marriage in the Ferghana Valley, see Jeff Sahadeo and Russell Zanca, *Everyday Life in Central Asia: Past and Present* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 31, 41, 174; Starr, *Ferghana Valley*, 172.

[37] See Christine Bichsel, Kholnazar Mukhabbatov, and Lenzi Sherfedinov, "Land, Water, and Ecology," in *Ferghana Valley*, edited by Starr, 255.

challenges face this region, including terrorism, transnational criminal organizations and smuggling, natural and man-made environmental risks, disputes over borders and land use rights, and poorly constructed roads and infrastructure.[38] The major urban areas outside of Uzbekistan with large Uzbek populations—Osh and Jalalabad in Kyrgyzstan—were also the sites of violent ethnic clashes in 2010. Characterizations of the region as burdened by its borders in "danger narratives" frequently drive outside speculation related to regional stability. These international misperceptions, as discussed on Chapter IV, influence international policy and foreign aid as well as security assistance funding.

The Ferghana Valley is a region with remarkable continuities and discontinuities. For much of its history, the Ferghana Valley has been continually unified under one political ruler,[39] whether indigenous or an outside invading force. "The Persians, Turks, Greeks, Arabs, Chinese, and Russians have all encroached on and transformed this region," observes Sally Cummings.[40] Babur was born in the Ferghana Valley and rose to become the first Mughal emperor; during the sixteenth century, he commented on the region's relative vulnerability to attack from both the East and the West.[41]

Geographic location also made the Ferghana Valley an important stop along the Silk Road. The Ferghana Valley provided markets for local goods and goods from afar but also produced many of the goods that went elsewhere along the Silk Road. The Ferghana Valley prospered. In Starr's words, "for centuries, artisans in Aksikent fashioned razor-sharp sabers for the immense Chinese market, while other locals surpassed most of China in their silk exports to the West."[42] This ancient history of Central Asia and the Ferghana Valley—along with more recent motifs, such as British geographer Halford J. Mackinder's theory of a Heartland lying between Europe, Asia,

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[38] Cummings, *Understanding Central Asia*, see 145–169.

[39] See Nick Megoran, "For Ethnography in Political Geography: Experiencing and Re-imagining Ferghana Valley Boundary Closures," *Political Geography* 25, no. 6 (2006): 623; and, Yuri Bregel, *Historical Atlas of Central Asia*, Handbook of Oriental Studies, Section Eight, Central Asia (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2003), 95.

[40] Cummings, *Understanding Central Asia*, 2.

[41] Abdukakhor Saidov, "The Ferghana Valley: The Pre-Colonial Legacy," in *Ferghana Valley*, 3.

[42] Starr, introduction to *Ferghana Valley*, xvii.

and the Middle East, and the British–Russian geopolitical competition of the Great Game—all further feed the Western imagination and give more reason for speculation about intrigue and conflict.

The Ferghana Valley's local geography, however, is far more nuanced than the typical Western news story about complicated borders or ethnic and religious tensions. Over the course of several years of fieldwork in the Ferghana Valley during the early 2000s, anthropologist Madeleine Reeves crisscrossed the Kyrgyz, Tajik, and Uzbek borders and transited around multiple enclave checkpoints and gates. Reeves witnessed firsthand the diversity in social life and the economy while traveling throughout the Ferghana Valley. "To stand at the border and to watch the passing traffic," Reeves contends, "is to glimpse the valley and its life-force in microcosm."[43] One of the striking characteristics drawn from Reeves' description of the border crossing is the diversity in relationships that she witnessed during her time in this region.[44] Along with the ethnographic observations from Reeves, a broader picture emerges from recent scholarship of the Ferghana Valley: the interconnectedness of relationships extends beyond Kyrgyz, Tajik, and Uzbek locals, but also to Russian and Chinese merchants and customers, among others. Consensus among scholars of this region is that such relationships have been fostered over the course of generations. Understanding these nuances is necessary to foreign diplomats and military leaders in order to formulate rightly guided policies and direct international aid and security assistance. Too often, however, these nuances are either ignored or disregarded by pundits and replaced by "catastrophizing" and misinformed speculation.[45]

Despite a common history, cultural differences in the Ferghana Valley are outwardly apparent, from traditional dress or staple meals to different politics and languages. S. Frederick Starr emphasizes the region's discontinuities as representative of

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[43] Madeleine Reeves, "Travels in the Margins of the State: Everyday Geography in the Ferghana Valley Borderlands," in *Everyday Life*, edited by Sahadeo and Zanca, 288.

[44] See Reeves, "Travels in the Margins of the State," 281–300. For a more in-depth description of relationships throughout the Ferghana Valley, see Madeleine Reeves, *Border Work: Spatial Lives of the State in Rural Central Asia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014).

[45] Starr, introduction to *Ferghana Valley*, xvii.

a "unity that does not exist,"[46] although imposed from foreigners. Starr contrasts the single name given to the Ferghana Valley, "a name imposed from without," with "the theme of complexity," but he also suggests that "the three national zones [related to Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan] have as much or more in common with each other than they do with the rest of the states of which each is a part."[47] Fixed borders meant little until they became internationalized almost overnight following independence from the Soviet Union in 1991.[48] Surrounded by mountains and fed by its two rivers, the Ferghana Valley is rich with cultural contrasts and geographic contradictions. The destinies of the communities in the Ferghana Valley on each side of the borders are intertwined because of these unique characteristics and connections, in addition to its dense population, natural resources and economic interdependence, and similar security challenges.

The political, social, and economic dynamics of the Ferghana Valley are interconnected. As Starr concludes, "whatever happens in the valley significantly affects all three of these countries in their economic, political, and religious spheres."[49] This interconnectedness and interdependence also affect regional security and stability. The Valley is therefore also important to the local hegemons of Russia and China. Additionally, the European Union and the United States have taken an increased interest in the region's security and stability since the involvement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) involvement in Afghanistan beginning in 2001. NATO's partnership programs involving the former Soviet republics began in December 1991 with the North Atlantic Cooperation Council and they have continued under the auspices of the Alliance's Partnership for Peace.[50]

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[46] Ibid.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Cummings, *Understanding Central Asia*, 5, 152; also, see Reeves, "Fixing the Border," 905–923.

[49] Starr, introduction to *Ferghana Valley*, xvii.

[50] See "Partners in Central Asia," *NATO Backgrounders*, NATO Public Diplomacy Division, November 2007 (Brussels, Belgium), report no. BGR5-ASI-ENG-1107-REV1, http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2007_11/2009_03_687B00694B0B4918A2143DBD2EB990F5_partners_central_asia-e.pdf.

B. SECURITY CONCERNS IN THE FERGHANA VALLEY

What have scholars learned about security and stability in the Ferghana Valley? This section addresses the security concerns that have justified border hardening between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, framed by Uzbekistan and interested foreign governments as "problems in need of solution."[51] Prior to examining the security challenges of the Ferghana Valley, the concepts of security and stability must first be understood.

1. Security and Stability Defined

Security and stability are linked within a larger historical and geopolitical context understood regionally. State security concerns result from local, national, and international threats, while overall stability is dependent on more than the emergent threats at various layers of society and within the international environment. While suggesting that geopolitics is important but "has to be analyzed in a political framework,"[52] Barry Buzan also argues that "the concept of security binds together" these various strata of agents into a regional security complex.[53] "Understanding the national security problem" of states, Buzan argues, "requires a wide-ranging understanding" of the multiple levels that connect security problems, including the regional, state, and individual scales.[54]

Comprehensive analyses of security problems contend with a dynamic environment of various actors and levels of scale. Security "binds together these levels" with "the actors and dynamics from the societal, economic, and environmental sectors," as well as the political and military dimensions.[55] Buzan asserts that the pathway toward accurate analysis includes the multiple levels, dynamics, and actors "in an integrative

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[51] Dennis J.D. Sandole, "Central Asia: Managing the Delicate Balance Between the 'Discourse of Danger,' the 'Great Game,' and Regional Problem Solving," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 40, no. 2 (2007): 262. doi:10.1016/j.postcomstud.2007.04.004.

[52] Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*, 5th printing (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 70.

[53] Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, 2nd ed. (Colchester, United Kingdom: ECPR Press, 2009), 283.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Ibid.

perspective."[56] Finally, Buzan suggests, "A full understanding of each [dynamic] can only be gained if it is related to the others."[57] Comprehensive analyses of security challenges must be "integrative," while "attempts to treat security as if it was confined to any single level or any single sector invites serious distortions of understanding."[58] Incorporating legitimacy and social perceptions of authority in regional security assessments provides a more complete and nuanced picture that accounts for the unintended consequences of the use of force.

In short, insights provided by Buzan and Wæver—along with those insights garnered from critical border studies over the last two decades—suggest that there are several core assumptions linking the concepts of stability and security. First, the stability–security relationship is bidirectional with each affecting the other. Second, history and geopolitics contextualize how various agents approach questions related to stability and security; these concepts are also deeply geographic and involve interactions between borders.[59] Third, security and stability problems involve complex political, economic, and social elements, while challenges are not confined to a single dimension or geographic scale. Security concerns and stability challenges must be understood holistically rather than through a single lens, such as the view that violence is caused merely by economic or ethnic conflict.[60] The challenge for security analysis is reconciling the different scales and actors with agency, while also recognizing that the state remains the fundamental agent exercising sovereignty, authority, and power within a territory.

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[56] Ibid.

[57] Buzan, *People, States and Fear*, 283.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Buzan and Wæver, *Regions and Powers*, 70.

[60] For analysis of ethnic violence and conflict, see Matthew Lange, *Killing Others: A Natural History of Ethnic Violence* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017). For analysis of the economic and political dynamics of violence and conflict, see Douglass C. North, John Joseph Wallis, and Barry R. Weingast, *Violence and Social Orders: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009). For a dependence on economic explanations for violence and conflict, see Jiancai Pi and Pengqing Zhang "Social Conflict and Wage Inequality," *Journal of Economics* 121, no. 1 (2017): 29–49, doi:10.1007/s00712-016-0515-3.

Recalling G. John Ikenberry's definition of stability from Chapter I, the state's ability to "recognize and respond" appropriately to a threat is essential for stability. It is the response that is normally associated with security. American political scientist David A. Baldwin asks, "Security for whom?"[61] This question sharpens the focus for considering security in terms of border hardening; specifically, Uzbekistan's autocratic regime seeks security for itself. Baldwin also conceptualizes "security as a policy objective distinguishable from others."[62] Instead of assuming security as inherent to states, Baldwin recognizes that it "competes with other goals for scarce resources,"[63] while noting that "the use of adjectives permits reference to many different kinds of security, e.g., economic security, environmental security, military security, social security, physical security, identity security, emotional security, and so on."[64] Additionally, there are different means toward state security, just as there are different means to conduct other state activities. The emphasis, however, is the domination of the state and its power and methods to enforce its policy.

There exists a deep tension between state authority and local autonomy, particularly in the realm of security and the use of power to enact rules at the border. While most theorists concede that the state may legitimately use force to maintain order and security, national interests may conflict with local interests. Stephen E. Hanson notes, "political scientists have to date paid relatively little attention to the issue of how political elites define and defend particular conceptions of state borders."[65] The defense of "particular conceptions of state borders" is not necessarily a military defense. The meaning of the border between local and government conceptions is, however, at the heart of this thesis: how are borders obeyed and acknowledged as legitimate by the local borderland population? The tension between national and local elements of society concerning the legitimacy of state authority and state power is especially acute at the

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61 David A. Baldwin, "The Concept of Security," *Review of International Studies*, 1997 (23), 13.

62 Baldwin, "The Concept of Security," 24.

63 Ibid.

64 Ibid., 24–25.

65 Hanson, "Russia, Ukraine, and the Borders of Europe," 2.

border, where loyalties to the state capital can be weaker and relationships across the border are inherent in the social and economic spheres of everyday life.

2. Security in the Ferghana Valley Borderlands

The border and surrounding borderland constitute a space where the state enforces security. Gearóid Ó Tuathail insists, "Monopolizing the right to speak authoritatively about 'security' in name of everyone—the ability to evoke the 'national interest' or a universal 'we'—is at the crux of the practice of power."[66] Autocratic regimes generally have a higher level of monopoly on the "security" narrative, as in the case of Uzbekistan, despite local and non-state actors competing for the legitimacy to claim security prerogatives. As Carl Schmitt argued, "The *protego ergo obligo* is the *cogito ergo sum* of the state."[67] In other words, providing security is the state's "core purpose," according to Schmitt's interpretation of Thomas Hobbes.[68] Border enforcement between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan supports economic, environmental, military, social, physical, and identity security. Generally, a state's enforcement of the border is achieved through coercive or normative methods. While most democratic states combine the two means, autocratic regimes disproportionately apply coercive border enforcement through means of force in order to achieve security.

While the factors of regional stability include a multitude of political, economic, social, and cultural asymmetries, this survey is limited to state security and related justifications for border hardening. Ostensibly, the reasons for border hardening are also related to the broader regional security concerns for Central Asia and its neighbors. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization—of which both Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan are members, along with China, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Tajikistan—repeatedly emphasizes

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[66] Gearóid Ó Tuathail, "Thinking Critically About Geopolitics," in *The Geopolitics Reader, edited by Gearóid Ó Tuathail, Simon Dalby, and Paul Routledge* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 3.

[67] Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political: Expanded Edition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 52. Schmitt's phrase can be translated as "I protect; therefore, I obligate."

[68] Nicholas Adams, George Pattison, and Graham Ward, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Theology and Modern European Thought* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2015), 262.

"three evil forces" of "terrorism, extremism, and separatism."[69] Cummings describes the change in the emphasis of security concerns following the Cold War, from threats from other states to "non-traditional threats," including "terrorist groupings; transnational criminal and drugs trafficking groups; and the depletion of and competition over resources and the environment."[70] The emphasis on non-traditional security threats, especially with reference to border enforcement, further broadens the state's control of the security narrative.

Assessments differ widely about the Ferghana Valley's stability, from a bed of instability to an anomaly of tranquility. This dichotomy of two extremes also "frames policies and practices of conflict resolution and international aid that themselves endanger" Central Asia.[71] "Policy making towards Central Asia," argue Nick Megoran and John Heathershaw, "is obstructed by a populist notion of Central Asia as a region of danger characterized by terrorism and Islamism, where political conflict is ever ready to erupt."[72] While frequently presented as the center of this seething conflict, the Ferghana Valley has not met widespread expectations of instability. Stability in the Ferghana Valley almost certainly lies somewhere between the two extremes and is more nuanced than much of the standard literature.

Since a primary justification for hardening the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border was security-based, it is important to understand how previous researchers assessed the potential for conflict as well as what those backing the "danger narrative" determined to be the greatest factors of instability. The postulated tensions are based on ethnic, religious, economic, and non-traditional threats, resource or environmentally based discords, and finally, territorial or border-related disputes. As Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly

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[69] Cummings, *Understanding Central Asia*, 146. For additional discussion on SCO's "three evils," see also Joshua Kucera, "Central Asia: Measuring the Geopolitical Impact of the Bishkek Bombing," *EurasiaNet*, 31 August 2016, www.eurasianet.org/node/80371.

[70] Ibid., see 155–156.

[71] John Heathershaw and Nick Megoran, "Contesting Danger: a New Agenda for Policy and Scholarship on Central Asia," *International Affairs* 87, no. 3 (2011): 590.

[72] John Heathershaw, Nick Megoran, Madeleine Reeves, David Lewis, "Discourses of Danger and Western Policy," Chatham House, 13 September 2010, https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/public/Research/Russia%20and%20Eurasia/130910summary.pdf.

argued in 2011, "Borders and borderlands…have become geopolitical spaces of contentions where asymmetrical economic, social, and political forces are either serving or in conflict with the agenda of central governments."[73] While local and regional conflicts have been overwhelmingly attributed to ethnic tensions or geopolitically incongruent borders, there are also strong narratives that argue that environmental or economic factors are sources of ongoing conflict. While the capitals of Kyrgyzstan (Dushanbe) and Uzbekistan (Tashkent) manipulate the social, political and economic dimensions of life along their national peripheries, the Ferghana Valley satisfies Brunet-Jailly's assessment along geopolitical and economic lines.

Finally, the security concerns of the Ferghana Valley are not easily reconciled with the contemporary social and economic challenges facing Uzbekistan. Border hardening is arguably detrimental to economic development and prospects for prosperity in the borderlands specifically and in the broader regional context. In her assessment of the many challenges facing states in the Ferghana Valley, British social anthropologist Madeleine Reeves asks several illuminating questions about border enforcement that underscore the tension between security and social and economic prosperity. The questions posed by Reeves are each contrasted with a "double bind" for an alternative path, between one decision or another. These questions point toward the central dilemma for all the Ferghana Valley states, but especially for Uzbekistan in light of its unilateral border hardening:

> How to have secure borders to prevent gold and other resources from being siphoned out, as well as to prevent armed militants from coming in, as had occurred during the summers of 1999 and 2000? How to have borders that are also permeable to those of us living here who depend on being able to move and visit and trade across them? How, especially, to do this in a situation where "law," like "border," presents itself in absurd forms: as an arbitrary, immobile imposition to some, and completely permeable to others?[74]

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[73] Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly, "Special Section: Borders, Borderlands and Theory: An Introduction," *Geopolitics* 16, no. 1 (2011): 1–6, doi: 10.1080/14650045.2010.493765.

[74] Reeves, *Border Work*, 143–144.

These questions are at the core of the tension for any modern state facing cross-border security threats, but that is also burdened with economic and social concerns. The government of Uzbekistan is especially hard-pressed to assert its authority, enforce its borders, and secure its future given its recent formation as a nation-state and the global norm that advocates "secure" borders.

While an instinctual response to security concerns is to harden the border, how does a state absorb the effects that this policy choice has on the economy? Additionally, how should the state reconcile security concerns with the need to improve economic and social integration with its neighbors? Border hardening between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan also concerns the local communities in the borderlands because relationships are crucial to everyday life. In the borderlands, where social and economic relationships have often flourished irrespective of political boundaries, the hardening of the border also threatens longstanding familial and tribal identities. These tensions relate to questions of security, prosperity, integration, and community relationships, but also influence how the population in the borderland perceives authority, especially whether the border rules are seen as legitimate.

C. BORDER STUDIES

> Geography is about power. Although often assumed to be innocent, the geography of the world is not a product of nature but a product of histories of struggle between competing authorities over the power to organize, occupy, and administer space.
>
> —Gearóid Ó Tuathail[75]

Border studies concepts and definitions inform the basic conceptual framework of this thesis. Borders are more than lines on maps; they are places of interaction. Influenced by earlier political geography and different forms of geopolitical inquiry, popular discourse about borders is usually related to themes of power and conflict. Furthermore, conflict within borderlands should be understood through a historical analysis of that particular territory; historical methods of narrative and process tracing are helpful in

75 Gearóid Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics: The Politics of Writing Global Space* (London: Routledge, 1997), 1.

illustrating a holistic view of conflict and stability and avoiding oversimplifications about the factors of conflict at a border.

1. More than Static Lines: Places of Interaction and Change

Territory and the borders that define it still matter.[76] Since all states have borders, there is a general consensus among geographers, sociologists, and political scientists that borders are a defining feature of a state. While academic disciplines from international relations to anthropology have long studied the role of the border, border studies developed in the mid-twentieth century as a unique field of research that focused exclusively on borders. Multidisciplinary approaches in border studies—for instance, combining historical and sociological methods to understand a bordering process—are common. As a division of human geography, border studies regularly draw from a wide spectrum of disciplines, including history, international affairs, comparative politics, sociology, anthropology, psychology, security studies, and legal studies.[77] At the same time, there have been considerable changes in the concept of the border and how borders are studied.

Borders represent places of interaction under constant change. While a border can be defined simply as "a fixed line that delimits the territory over which a state is sovereign,"[78] it is far more than a two-dimensional line on a map. Borders are dynamic places where power, people, and territory interact with other factors, creating not static lines between states but complex and changing border landscapes.[79] While German geographer and ethnographer Friedrich Ratzel described borders as "the skin of the living

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[76] See John Agnew, *Place and Politics: The Geographical Mediation of State and Society* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1987), 36; and, Stuart Elden, *The Birth of Territory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 2.

[77] Thomas M. Wilson, introduction to *A Companion to Border Studies*, edited by Thomas M. Wilson and Hastings Donnan (Hoboken, Great Britain: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012); see also Corey Johnson, Reece Jones, Anssi Paasi, Louise Amoore, Alison Mountz, Mark Salter, and Chris Rumford, "Interventions on Rethinking 'the Border' in Border Studies," *Political Geography* 30, no. 2 (2011): 61–62.

[78] Vallet, *Borders, Fences and Walls*, 30.

[79] See Dennis Rumley, introduction to *The Geography of Border Landscapes*, edited by Dennis Rumley and Julian V. Minghi (New York: Routledge, 2015), 1–14.

state,"[80] Julian Minghi referenced Ellen Churchill Semple's "dynamic view of boundaries" that are responsive to both cultural as well as physical pressures and S. Whittemore Boggs' concept that boundaries are places where "'a sort of osmosis takes place,' the osmotic pressure increasing directly with institutional barriers to interactance."[81] A casual observer notices that some borders of a state follow geographic or ethnic topography, but in most cases, the political nature of state borders is artificially imposed on the land. Borders also differ in the degree that they differentiate people or demarcate territory.

2. Globalization: Borders Never Left, Just Shifted

In the age of the nation-state, territory is the place where states exercise sovereignty. Max Weber's famous definition of a state was centered on its territorial dimension: its "monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory."[82] This definition of a state remains valid today, implying the continued relevance of territory and physical borders. Calls for a borderless world based on theories of globalization[83] have been widely rejected, with governments hardening and thickening borders since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.[84] The number of border fences and walls built by states nearly tripled in the twenty years from 1992 to 2012.[85]

Enforcement is often accomplished through fences, walls, checkpoints and customs inspection areas, visa and passport controls, and taxes, as well as the criminalization of illegal crossings. Noel Parker and Rebecca Adler-Nissen build upon

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[80] As quoted in Vallet, *Borders, Fences and Walls*, 30.

[81] Julian V. Minghi, "Boundary Studies in Political Geography," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 53, no. 3 (1963): 407, 410. Minghi describes Ellen Churchill Semple's framework as a "dynamic view of boundaries, not as artificial lines, but as variable zones open to pressures from both physical and cultural" factors (407). Minghi also summarizes the developments of Albert Perry Brigham's "Principles in the Determination of Boundaries," *Geographical Review* 7 (April, 1919): 201–219. According to Minghi, Brigham provided a distinction between "economically unnatural boundaries" and definite physical boundaries (410).

[82] Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," 1918, as cited by Patrick H. O'Neil and Ronald Rogowski, *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2013), 24.

[83] See Kenichi Ohmae, *The Borderless World* (New York: Harper Business, 1990).

[84] See Vallet, *Borders, Fences and Walls*.

[85] Ibid., 13.

Walker's "politicization of sovereignty"[86] and the idea that globalization does not imply the end of borders. Their hypothesis contends that bordering practices involve exercising sovereignty through "sovereignty games," that is, the use of physical force, political coercion, and legal threats along the state's border to enforce compliance.[87] Elisabeth Vallet notes, "Border walls have become…markers of identity, instruments of differentiation, tools at the service of State sovereignty."[88] Borders are a visible extension of the power of a state, and they "are central features in current international disputes relating to security, migration, trade, and natural resources."[89] Borders function to include and exclude, creating the alterity of the other through the "politics of boundaries."[90]

Several early researchers identified borders with the central control of the state. A. E. Moodie, reports Minghi, "reasoned that, as boundaries epitomized the growth of centralization of authority and power of the states they divided, the functions of a boundary were derived, not from the nature of the line, but from the nature of the communities it separated."[91] Ladis D. Kristof's theoretical formulation of boundaries as "inner-oriented, the outer line of effective control of the central government, and indicated the range and vigor of centripetal forces,"[92] is applicable to understanding the focus of this thesis: the nexus between local border dynamics, national border policies, and conflict. Laim O'Dowd argues that "a more reflective and empirical historical analysis for interpreting border change" demonstrates not a "borderless world," but

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86 R. B. J. Walker, *After the Globe, Before the World* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 184.

87 Noel Parker and Rebecca Adler-Nissen, "Picking and Choosing the 'Sovereign' Border: A Theory of Changing State Bordering Practices," *Geopolitics* 17, no. 4 (2012), 773–796, notably the discussion of "sovereignty games" on 790.

88 Vallet, *Borders, Fences and Walls*, 14.

89 Alexander C. Diener and Joshua Hagen, *Borders: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 1.

90 R. B. J. Walker, *Out of Line: Essays on the Politics of Boundaries and the Limits of Modern Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 16.

91 A. E. Moodie, *The Geography Behind Politics* (London: Hutchinson's University Library, 1957), 83, as cited by Minghi, "Boundary Studies in Political Geography," 413 n37.

92 Ladis D. Kristof, "The Nature of Frontiers and Boundaries," *Annals, Association of American Geographers* 49 (September, 1959), 269–82, as cited by Minghi, "Boundary Studies in Political Geography," 414 n42.

instead a "world of borders."[93] While some scholars describe borders as ungoverned spaces, part of the periphery of the state, on the edges of power, where the state's monopoly on force is limited,[94] others recognize that most borders are instituted, enforced, and monopolized by states.[95]

3. Historical Sense of Borders as Places of Conflict

While many military professionals lack formal training in political geography, they are familiar with popularized geopolitical accounts of borders and conflict.[96] While Robert Kaplan and like-minded authors consider borders in relation to conflict, their analyses are less focused on local dynamics at the border than on international dynamics. This pedagogy shaped much of the early discourse in border studies and, while recent scholarship reflects a liberalizing of disciplines and approaches, standard perceptions that shape public opinion and policy formation are still grounded in legacy studies.

Conflict and the pursuit of stability have been central to geography and the study of borders since the early twentieth century.[97] The discipline of political geography, for

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[93] Laim O'Dowd, "From a 'Borderless World' to a 'World of Borders': 'Bringing history back in,'" *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28, no. 6 (2010): 1031–1050, quote specifically from 1047, doi:10.1068/d2009.

[94] Benedikt Korf and Timothy Raeymaekers, eds, *Violence on the Margins: States, Conflict, and Borderlands* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

[95] For a discussion on state monopoly of the border, see David Newman, "On Borders and Power: A Theoretical Framework," *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, 18, no. 1 (2003): 15–16, doi: 10.1080/ 08865655.2003.9695598. Elsewhere, Newman draws a comparison between the state and local focus in border studies, as well as analysis between physical and subjective borders: "Hardcore geographers understand borders as constituting the physical lines separating States in the international system and, in some cases, the administrative lines separating municipalities and planning regions. Sociologists and anthropologists understand borders as being the abstract lines of separation between the 'us' and the 'them,' the 'here' and the 'there,' and as constituting the very essence of difference. Between these two contrasting approaches, there lies a range of definitions and terminologies which remain exclusive and specific to a particular discipline and understanding of borders - with economists, historians, inter- national lawyers and others all having their own specific disciplinary narratives." Cited from David Newman, "The Lines that Continue to Separate Us: Borders in Our 'Borderless' World," *Progress in Human Geography* 30, no. 2 (2006): 154, doi: 10.1191/0309132506ph599xx.

[96] For an example, see Robert D. Kaplan, "The Revenge of Geography," *Foreign Policy* 172 (2009): 96–105; or the author's book version of popular geopolitical arguments, Robert D. Kaplan, *The Revenge of Geography: What the Map Tells Us About Coming Conflicts and the Battle Against Fate* (New York: Random House, 2012).

[97] Minghi, "Boundary Studies in Political Geography," 407–428; Megoran, McConnell, and Williams, "Geography and Peace," 123–138.

instance, analyzes the "ways in which politics and conflict create spaces and places and, in turn, are themselves partially determined by the existence and nature of geographical entities."[98] Political geography is naturally concerned with the interaction of territory, people, the state, and power. Megoran notes, "the scholarship of three particularly influential geographers—Friedrich Ratzel, Halford Mackinder, and Nicholas Spykman—was central to these connections between geography, the state and warcraft," in the development of geopolitics.[99]

State security concerns, as well as the institutional evolution of borders, often revolve around some form of conflict. More specifically, the bordering and de-bordering described earlier by Brunet-Jailly, as well as the process of border hardening, result more often than not from territorial conflict. While cartographers draw borderlines as markers of state sovereignty on two-dimensional maps, Jonathan Goodhand argues that borders and associated borderlands are "central to the dimensions of war and peace."[100] Borders are "sites of political struggles, contestation, and renegotiation," and inherently mark territories of both conflict and cooperation.[101]

4. Contextualizing Border Conflict with Historical Narrative

Views on the functions of borders today are also linked with historical factors that define the state as it is today. From the Westphalian sovereignty of the seventeenth century to the nation-state alignment after the two world wars of the twentieth century, borders retain a special place in international law through the United Nations Charter and multiple conventions. Such a view, however, is more aligned with the actual functioning of borders in Europe and North America. The imposition of idealized Western-style

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98 Colin Flint, "Political Geography," in *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, 5th ed., eds. Derek Gregory, Ron Johnston, Geraldine Pratt, Michael Watts, Sarah Whatmore (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2009), 549.

99 Megoran, McConnell, and Williams, "Geography and Peace," 123–138.

100 Jonathan Goodhand, "War, Peace and the Places in Between: Why Borderlands are Central," eds. M, Pugh et al., In *Whose peace? Critical Perspectives on the Political Economy of Peacebuilding* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 225, 240.

101 Alena Pfoser, "Between Security and Mobility: Negotiating a Hardening Border Regime in the Russian-Estonian Borderland," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 41, no. 10 (2015), 1689, doi: 10.1080/1369183X.2015.1015408.

borders in the Ferghana Valley—at a minimum, through foreign aid and security assistance programs—becomes relevant for how the global border norms contextualize state security policies and local border dynamics.

Contradictions arise along borders in regions like Sub-Saharan Africa or Central Asia, where the lines were drawn more recently and not as a result of war or longer-term historical developments. Describing Afghanistan and the borders of Central Asia, Helena Rytövuori-Apunen argues that such regions do not have "a solid historical basis" for demarcated borders; essentially, the "tradition has only shallow roots" for borders.[102] Rytövuori-Apunen suggests broadening border study research, particularly in the cases of border hardening, beyond "the borderline and the management practices expected to 'filter' interaction between states" and not focusing only on "events as 'incidents' (border incidents, violent incidents) as if they occurred only sporadically," but within "temporal layers" and a historical context.[103] The historical context of the Ferghana Valley contributes not only to a richer understanding of conflict but also to a deeper comprehension of border processes, such as the border hardening between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan.

5. Evaluating Borders legitimation

Recent scholarship in border studies explores questions of place in relation to borders, that is, "where do we look for evidence of bordering practices and what are the impacts on particular places?"[104] Other questions consider the performance of borders, asking, how are borders materialized and experienced?[105] The different perspectives of

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[102] Helena Rytövuori-Apunen, "Introduction: Bordering Practices Challenging State Borders," in *The Regional Security Puzzle Around Afghanistan: Bordering Practices in Central Asia and Beyond*, ed. Helena Rytövuori-Apunen (Toronto: Barbara Budrich, 2016), 7–8, doi:10.3224/84740789.

[103] Ibid., 7–8.

[104] Corey Johnson, Reece Jones, Anssi Paasi, Louise Amoore, Alison Mountz, Mark Salter, and Chris Rumford, "Interventions on Rethinking 'the Border' in Border Studies," *Political Geography* 30, no. 2 (2011), 62.

[105] See Reece Jones and Corey Johnson, *Placing the Border in Everyday Life*, ed. (New York: Routledge, 2016), especially 9. For Megoran's discussion of the materialization and experiencing of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan boundary, see Nick Megoran, "B/ordering and Biopolitics in Central Asia," in *A Companion to Border Studies*.

border analysis ask "who borders?" and consider the politicizing of borders, which demonstrates the "complicated relationship between state power and space."[106] Outlined by Corey Johnson and Reece Jones, the four "p's" of place, performance, perspective, and politics are lenses to analyze the complex dynamics of borders and borderlands.[107]

Borders become zones of political, cultural, and socio-economic interaction among people of different identities. According to Dennis Rumley and Julian Minghi, co-editors of the 1991 book *The Geography of Border Landscapes*, four characteristics of the border landscape can be evaluated: political, social, economic, and interstate interactions.[108] All four themes are relevant to studying border landscapes from within a state or across international borders, especially when considering questions of security or stability.

Borders are central to security and military operations but they should not only be thought of as barriers. As Jussi P. Laine argues, "State borders are complex and dynamic multiscalar entities that have different symbolic and material forms maintained by a multiplicity of bordering processes and practices."[109] Appreciation for the complexity of borders remains two-dimensional, limited to a static line that serves as a kind of perimeter or barrier to the movement of people and material. Borders are centers of local interaction, points of contact between groups, important indicators of other social or political stressors. David Newman suggests that "borders come to life" with the bottom-up narrative from the borderlands.[110] The familial and local level is where people often determine loyalties toward the regime or other competing narratives, whether supportive or disruptive of the status quo.

The border is also a place of work for the security personnel and bureaucrats who implement the border rules. Madeleine Reeves examines the dynamics of border life from

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106 Johnson, Jones, Paasi, Amoore, Mountz, Salter, and Rumford, "Interventions on Rethinking 'the Border' in *Border Studies*," 62.

107 Ibid.

108 Rumley and Minghi, *Geography of Border Landscapes*, 296.

109 Jussi P. Laine, "The Multiscalar Production of Borders," *Geopolitics* 21, no. 3 (2016), 466, doi: 10.1080/14650045.2016.1195132.

110 Newman, "The Lines that Continue to Separate Us," 152.

the perspective of both the border guards and the people who live in the shadow of the border; her book-length examination epitomizes the bottom-up approach to border analysis with a focus on the border institution.[111] This is the meaning of the "bottom-up" and "top-down" analysis of borders. Political and military appreciation for the utility of borders is also too frequently limited to the level of the state or the strategic level, rather than identifying tactical and operational concerns for the role of borders.[112]

Understanding borders from the bottom-up local level provides deeper insight into how borders affect stability. As Yves Lacoste states, "a geopolitical situation is defined, at a given moment in historical evolution, by rivalries between powers on a relatively large scale, and by relationships between forces in different parts of the territory in question."[113] Lacoste describes how "power rivalries, both official and unofficial...develop within many states where minority populations claim either their autonomy or their independence…[while] geopolitical rivalries exist within a single country between the main political parties who are seeking to extend their influence in a particular region or town."[114]

These official and unofficial power rivalries—especially those between the local populations who experience or challenge the bordering regime's rules—are not two-sided but multi-dimensional. While the local populations amount to varying groups vying for influence and advantage, the different levels of government—from national down to local or tribal—also contend to define their territorial advantage. Borderlands are especially complicated regions because of their diversity and the multiple scales of agency, including varying cultural, social, political, economic, and social relationships.

The politically powerful or so-called "peripheral elites" are also viewed as integral to extending state power to the borders and shaping the overall prospects for

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111 Reeves, *Border Work*.

112 Rumley and Minghi, *Geography of Border Landscapes*, 1.

113 Yves Lacoste, "Rivalries for Territory," *Geopolitics* 5, no. 2 (2000), 122, doi: 10.1080/14650040008407683.

114 Ibid.

stability.[115] With the turn toward localizing border studies and the focus on conflict, it is reasonable to ask how local border dynamics affect stability. The school of critical geopolitics represents this recent trend in political geography to localize conflict, in contrast with earlier scholarship that regionalized or globalized dynamics around borders.[116] A focus on the world scale has been common in border studies, especially in the context of globalization and international governmental organizations (IGO) and transnational organizations.[117]

6. Definitions and Core Concepts: Territory in a State's Foreign Policy

As an academic discipline, border studies emerged in part from scholars "interested in investigating how the state sustained its historically dominant role as an arbiter of control, violence, order and organization for those whose identities were being transformed by world forces."[118] While border research is now an expansive field, the trend since the end of the Cold War has been toward "an interest in what the lives of borderland peoples were like" and away from analyzing questions related to "the political economy of the territory."[119] These are commonly understood as "national," "international," or "interstate" borders rather than intra-state borders that define sub-territories of a state. More specifically, an interstate border defines the physical limit of the state's sovereign territory; it is expressly political in nature, defining the physical limit of a particular political entity.

The physical aspect of territory must also be emphasized because states act outside their defined physical borders—legally—through various treaties, by procedures for the extradition of criminals, and at diplomatic facilities abroad, etc. Definitions

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115 Jonathan Goodhand, "War, Peace and the Places in Between: Why Borderlands are Central," eds. M, Pugh et al., In *Whose peace? Critical Perspectives on the Political Economy of Peacebuilding* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 225, 240.

116 Gearóid Ó Tuathail, "Localizing Geopolitics: Disaggregating Violence and Return in Conflict Regions," *Political Geography* 29, no. 5 (2010): 256–265.

117 Johnson, Jones, Paasi, Amoore, Mountz, Salter, and Rumford, "Interventions on Rethinking 'the Border' in *Border Studies*," 61.

118 Wilson and Donnan, "Borders and Border Studies," *A Companion to Border Studies*, 5.

119 Ibid., 5–6.

related to territory and borders vary considerably, depending on the academic discipline that defines them or the specific research agenda. This section provides the basic definitions and core concepts for use throughout the thesis. Beyond discussing definitions and core concepts, it is necessary to dispel suggestions that borders are somehow less relevant in the twenty-first century than in the past.

Borders are literally everywhere, with states exercising more power at the edge of their territories than arguably ever before. As Thomas M. Wilson and Hastings Donnan note in their *Companion to Border Studies*, "There are more international borders in the world today than ever there were before."[120] The study of borders waned following the end of the Cold War, as calls for a "borderless world" were underpinned by concepts for economic and social flattening through globalization. Cosmopolitanism and the enthusiasm for globalization were not necessarily malicious, simply misguided. These perceptions of a newfound liberty from borders were arguably built on post-Soviet Western triumphalism and euphoria, in addition to the preceding years of relative border stability. In a 1982 essay entitled "The Political Problems of Frontier Regions" Malcolm Anderson held that border disputes were "an insignificant feature of European politics,"[121] an understandable observation given the contrast with an earlier generation's turmoil involving World War II and post-colonial nationalism. In comparison, the Cold War might now be characterized by an almost frozen state in European borders.

Writing prior to the signing of the Schengen Agreement in 1985, Anderson considered this frozen state of borders as hazardous to the regional stability of Europe. Anderson was concerned that the "very stability of international boundaries" in Europe caused "rigidity" and might adversely impact economic and social activities.[122] This border rigidity began fading as a result of the end of the Cold War, including the collapse of the Soviet Union, the reunification of Germany, and the disintegration of Yugoslavia.

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[120] Wilson and Donnan, "Borders and Border Studies," in *A Companion to Border Studies*, 1.

[121] Malcolm Anderson, "The Political Problems of Frontier Regions," *West European Politics* 5 no. 4 (1982), 2, doi: 10.1080/01402388208424381.

[122] Anderson, "The Political Problems of Frontier Regions," 2.

Additionally, once the Schengen Agreement entered into "full force in 1995,"[123] citizens within the Schengen zone moved about "unhindered across open borders."[124] European and Eurasian borders continued shifting in meaning through the 1990s, with the pressures of non-traditional threats, such as terrorism, again hardening borders in the twenty-first century.

Recent history of changing borders challenges the "end of history" and "borderless world" theses, both contradicted by the border realities of the former Soviet Union. An example of the increased production of borders in the post-Soviet (and post-Yugoslav) space is that "20 of the 36 new UN members after 1990 are from Central, Eastern and South-eastern Europe."[125] While dialogue in the 1990s among academics and policy-makers held that "we were all living in a world where state borders were increasingly obsolete, where porous international borders no longer fulfilled their historical role as barriers to the movement of aliens and citizens, and as markers of the extent and power of the state,"[126] the collective twenty-first century dialogue appears more sober. Given the securitization of borders following the 9/11 attacks and the rise of global terrorism as well as transnational criminal organizations, "there are more states, more state institutions, more state intrusion into the daily lives of citizens and denizens (through the utilization of new technologies), and more state intervention into global political economy," than ever before in history.[127]

The paradox of the twenty-first century resides in the tension between two seemingly contradictory but simultaneous worlds: one that is ever more connected through communications, social media, and transportation networks, and one that is increasingly partitioned, divided, and separated through economic, social, cultural, political, security, and educational borders. Particularly since the disintegration of the

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123 Alice Cunha, *The Borders of Schengen* (Brussels, Belgium: Peter Lang, 2015), 9.

124 Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (New York: Penguin Press, 2005), 718.

125 Anna Krasteva, "Space, Lines, Borders: Imaginaries and Images," in *Borderscaping: Imaginations and Practices of Border Making*, edited by Chiara Brambilla, Jussi Laine, and Gianluca Bocchi (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015), 18.

126 Wilson and Donnan, "Borders and Border Studies," in *A Companion to Border Studies*, 5.

127 Ibid.

Soviet Union and Yugoslavia in 1991, this diversity in the types and forms of borders has been the focus of geographers, anthropologists, and sociologists, among other scholars. Geographer Anna Krasteva identifies the "political logic" that stems from two different "constructions" of borders: "top-down and bottom-up."[128] Krasteva further elaborates with different "conceptual" frameworks of border thinking, including "power, sovereignty, security" and "identities, symbols, imaginaries."[129] It is necessary to understand how borders impact individuals and communities, as well as how political elites perceive state borders.

The overall distinction of these two methods, however, is between boundary and border studies. The former explores "the scholarly fascination with this intersection of the metaphorical negotiations of borderlands of personal and group identity," while the latter (which is more relevant to this research) seeks to explain aspects of "the geopolitical realization of international, state and other borders of polity, power, territory and sovereignty."[130] Ultimately, border studies add to an already rich multidisciplinary body of research on the nexus with the state, territory, and use of power. These are core concepts of Weber's sociological theory of the state, legitimacy, and obedience.

Political borders are also "artificial" in the sense that they are constructed. David Newman claims without controversy that "there are no 'natural' borders as such—all borders are social constructions, delimited and demarcated by people."[131] Walter Leimgruber asserts strongly that "boundaries," used interchangeably here with borders, "are thus social constructs, conditioned by our perception of an attitude towards space."[132] Borders are important to states because they "create difference."[133] In actuality, borders do not create the difference between groups but define and mark the

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[128] Krasteva, "Space, Lines, Borders: Imaginaries and Images," 24.

[129] Ibid.

[130] Wilson and Donnan, "Borders and Border Studies," in *A Companion to Border Studies*, 2.

[131] David Newman, "On Borders and Power: A Theoretical Framework," *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, 18, no. 1 (2003) 17, doi: 10.1080/08865655.2003.9695598.

[132] Walter Leimgruber, "The Swill–Italia Transborder Region," in Dennis Rumley and Julian V. Minghi, *The Geography of Border Landscapes.* New York: Routledge, 1991, 45.

[133] Newman, "On Borders and Power: A Theoretical Framework," 15.

difference created through other processes, which precipitates alterity.[134] Regardless, Newman is correct to argue, "The existence of borders enables us to maintain some sort of order, both within the spaces and groups which are thus encompassed, as well as between 'our' compartment and that of the 'other' groups and spaces which are part of a broader system of global ordering."[135] This process of bordering brings about alterity between those in the state and those outside the line. Such "othering" can be deeply emotional and politically powerful when there are questions over which state has legitimate claims to a certain disputed space.

This thesis deals with interstate borders at the physical edge of a state's territory, and several core concepts are used in border studies to characterize this space. Beyond the borderline itself, there is the broader application of a boundary, as well as distinctions concerning frontiers and borderlands. This thesis uses historian Bradley J. Parker's approach toward these concepts of space, merging the political and geopolitical nuances when it might further clarify the concept for the purposes of this thesis. The concepts are dealt with from the general to the specific, from the vague to the clear.

Parker defines a borderland as a space "around or between political or cultural entities where geographic, political, demographic, cultural, and economic circumstances or processes may interact to create borders or frontiers."[136] One nuance from a frontier is that a borderland emphasizes the constructive interaction between different groups of people. The lack of symmetry among different definitions from the various disciplines using these terms further complicates the use of these concepts in literature, media, policy-making, and academia. While historians and anthropologists define a borderland differently, both usually describe it as "a geopolitical space."[137] As a geopolitical concept, borderlands are the "regions around or between political or cultural entities—the

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134 Alterity is defined here as "otherness." More specifically, alterity is defined as, "The fact or state of being other or different; diversity, difference, otherness; an instance of this." See *Oxford English Dictionary* s.v. "alterity," March 2017, www.oed.com.

135 Newman, "On Borders and Power: A Theoretical Framework," 15.

136 Bradley J. Parker, "Toward an Understanding of Borderland Processes," *American Antiquity* 71, no. 1 (2006): 80.

137 Parker, "Toward an Understanding of Borderland Processes," 80.

geographic space in which frontiers and borders are likely to exist."[138] Borderlands exist under multiple conditions of border types; while conflict might sometimes stem from these areas, borderlands may also be places of commerce, innovation, blended cultures, and mixed political loyalties.

Parker defines boundaries as the "unspecific divides or separators that indicate limits of various kinds."[139] A boundary "encompasses the more specific terms border and frontier."[140] Boundaries are part of the borderland landscape and might include the border or an aspect of natural geography, such as mountain ranges, large bodies of water, or deserts. Both terms have meanings that have morphed in the last century of usage. As the concepts become more specific, Parker proposes that "there are two types of boundaries that may occur in borderlands: borders and frontiers."[141] Both of these terms have also changed in meaning over the last century.

Given the many definitions for the geopolitical terms frontier and border, the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) offers a helpful starting reference. A frontier, according to the OED, is "The part of a country which fronts or faces another country; the marches; the border or extremity conterminous with that of another."[142] Specifically related to the settlement of the United States, frontier means "That part of a country which forms the border of its settled or inhabited regions." Both definitions refer to an area at the edge of settlement, just before the territory is considered "wild," as with the American Wild West. Parker describes a frontier as "a zone of interpenetration between two previously distinct peoples…[that] could separate various types of political and cultural units and [notes] that such zones may also be made up of empty areas where no such units exist or where they do not come onto direct physical contact."[143] Frontiers are more specific than a boundary, but still "fuzzy" in terms of their exact geographic point on a map.

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[138] Ibid.

[139] Ibid., 79.

[140] Ibid.

[141] Ibid., 80.

[142] *Oxford English Dictionary,* s.v. "frontier" March 2017, http://www.oed.com.

[143] Parker, "Toward an Understanding of Borderland Processes," 79.

Frontiers are also spaces defined by generalizations, such as marking the space from one area to another. Parker broadens the definition beyond a natural feature, noting, "frontiers are made up of various types of boundaries including, for example, geographic, political, demographic, cultural, and economic boundaries."[144] Traditional or charismatic borders are more likely to be defined by frontier spaces, while those bounded by legal-rational legitimacy depend on the processes of delimitation and eventual demarcation to specify the lines on a map and the ground. Frontiers are a "complicated matrix of overlapping boundaries,"[145] whose lack of clarity itself might produce different perceptions about a border's legitimacy and a country's territorial sovereignty. The use of the term "frontier" is more common among political geographers or sociologists to connote the decrease in enforced political order at the margins in relation to the center of the state; anthropologists and geographers who practice ethnography might prefer the term "borderlands" to identify and emphasize the territory around borders as a point of interaction.

Borders are easier to define than frontiers because they are usually associated with a "line in the sand."[146] The OED defines a border as "The boundary line which separates one country from another, the frontier line."[147] More narrowly, borders are the "linear dividing lines, fixed in a particular space, meant to mark the division between political and/or administrative units."[148] Parker recognizes that "when one leaves one country to enter another, one crosses the 'border' that is a tangible line between separate political or administrative entities," but he also observes that the "borders of modern nation states do not necessarily govern other types of boundaries," such as "divisions between ethnic or linguistic groups."[149] Borders hold powerful potential as symbols, cultural and political,

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144 Ibid., 80.

145 Ibid.

146 For an historical and conceptual account of the U.S.-Mexico "line in the sand," with concepts to other borders, see Rachel St. John, *Line in the Sand: A History of the Western U.S.-Mexico Border* (Princeton, NJ: University Press, 2011).

147 *Oxford English Dictionary,* s.v. "border," March 2017, http://www.oed.com.

148 Parker, "Toward an Understanding of Borderland Processes," 79.

149 Parker, "Toward an Understanding of Borderland Processes," 79.

for the state and opposing narratives. Parker also describes borders as "a type of division," with a primary characteristic "that they mark political, administrative, and in most cases also military, boundaries."[150] Based on the different types of border management throughout the world, depending on one's status as "the Other" or as part of the group, border-crossing can be either an extremely challenging endeavor or an action as smoothly accomplished as swiping one's identification in a scanner. Borders continue in the twenty-first century to control the flow of people and goods, while symbolizing the control of the state at its edge.

[150] Ibid.

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III. BORDERS, INSTITUTIONS, AND LEGITIMACY

> And you must consider: If you commit extortion against the peasants, take their oxen and seed, and cause their crops to be consumed, what will you do in the future?
>
> — Ghāzān Khān, 13th Century Mongol Emperor[151]

The statement by the thirteenth century Mongol emperor Ghāzān Khān suggests a deep understanding about the role of legitimacy in state power and authority, especially when exercised against the marginalized. Prior to focusing on border hardening and local perceptions in the Ferghana Valley, this chapter considers more broadly the role of borders as institutions, the concept of legitimacy of borders, and border hardening as an institutional process that affects legitimacy. Border hardening is also considered in relation to stability and the prevailing global norm of fixed borders.

A. BORDERS AS AN INSTITUTION

The institutional nature of borders forms the first assumption underpinning the conceptual framework of this thesis. While this thesis explores the role of legitimacy, the object of legitimacy is the border as an institution. American political scientist Stephen E. Hanson asserts "that state borders are, in essence, a type of political institution."[152] Generally, institutions are crucial for the political, economic, and social ordering of a population within a territory. Indeed, borders are one of the most visible institutions of a state and a tangible sign of state sovereignty for those communities living in the borderlands. Marking not only the territorial divide between two sovereign states, a border institution also propagates state authority at the edge or periphery of a state. The border institution communicates rules—whether political, economic, or social in nature—that the state, in turn, expects the population to obey.

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[151] David Morgan, *The Mongols*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2008), 147.

[152] Hanson, "Russia, Ukraine, and the Borders of Europe,"11.

1. Institutions: Theory and Definition

Before describing the institutional nature of borders, it is useful to explore the theoretical concept of institutions in relation to rules. The scholarly disciplines of history, law, political philosophy, economics, sociology, and international relations, as well as other social sciences have all influenced the development of Western institutional theory. Adam Smith attempted to explain how societies, economies, and governments were structured in his 1759 book *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* and his 1776 treatise *The Wealth of Nations*.[153] Since Smith's publications in the eighteenth century, institutional theory has developed into multiple theories and concepts regarding social and political structure and behavior.[154] According to American political scientist B. Guy Peters, "the roots of political science are" in fact "in the study of institutions."[155] In as much as border institutions propagate territorial order through formal rules, institutional theory explains how rules relate to legitimacy, perceptions, and stability.

Rules are central to the nature of an institution. German socio-economist Wolfram Elsner explores the role of institutions in influencing behavior.[156] "An institution," according to Elsner, is "a decision or behavior rule (or pattern of behavior) governing the activities of individuals in recurrent multipersonal situations."[157] Elsner's definition is useful particularly because it elaborates on the relationship between the institution, its

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[153] The full title of Smith's *The Wealth of Nations was Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations.* For an introduction to Adam Smith's writings, particularly related to their contribution to modern institutional theory, see Wolfram Elsner, "Adam Smith's Model of the Origins and Emergence of Institutions: The Modern Findings of the Classical Approach," *Journal of Economic Issues* 23, no. 1 (1989): 189–213, doi:10.1080/00213624.1989.11504874.

[154] For discussion of political institutions, see Elinor Ostrom, "An Agenda for the Study of Institutions," *Public Choice* 48, no. 1 (1986), www.jstor.org/stable/30024572.

[155] B. Guy Peters, *Institutional Theory in Political Science: The New Institutionalism*, 3rd ed. (New York: Continuum, 2012), 1.

[156] Enrico Colombatto draws the connection between Adam Smith and twentieth-century theorists on institutions. Colombatto states: "Adam Smith underscored the role of institutions both in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (e.g., in Part III) and in *The Wealth of Nations* (e.g., in Book V). See also Buchanan (1976) and Elsner (1989) on the Smithian insights into institutional analysis." E. Colombatto, "A Theory of Institutional Legitimacy," Working Paper No. 5/2012, International Centre for Economic Research, Torino, Italy, 2n1, http://www.biblioecon.unito.it/biblioservizi/RePEc/icr/wp2012/ICERwp05-12.pdf.

[157] Wolfram Elsner, "Adam Smith's Model of the Origins and Emergence of Institutions: The Modern Findings of the Classical Approach," *Journal of Economic Issues* 23, no. 1 (1989): 191, doi:10.1080/00213624.1989.11504874.

particular rules, and individual as well as social (i.e., multipersonal) behavior. Elsner elaborates on this relationship:

> The rule is generally acknowledged within the community, thus providing the basis for consistent mutual expectations regarding decisions or behavior, including the expectation that deviation from the rule will be subject to a negative sanction, thereby leaving the individual worse off than in case of a general conformance to the rule. The general validity (that is, acknowledgement) of the rule is based upon either of the following: (1) the individual's willingness to obey the rule provided that other individuals do the same; or (2) the certain knowledge that deviation from the rule will result in an effective negative sanction.[158]

The central theme in Elsner's explanation is that institutional rules form a common expectation "regarding decisions or behavior" within society. Additionally, rule "validity" or "acknowledgement" is based on two assumptions: that individual obedience is influenced by the other's "willingness to obey the rule" and that "deviation" from these rules necessarily earns the violator a negative sanction. Finally, institutions make rules that are intended to govern individual and social behavior. This last assumption forms one of the principal premises discussed in Chapter V.

An institution—as with the later concept of legitimacy—is a vaguer term in the social sciences than some would like because it governs through both formal and informal rules. The border institution is certainly governed by formal rules, but informal social and cultural rules also dictate behavior in the borderlands. Nobel laureate and economist Douglass North defines institutions as "the humanly devised constraints that structure political, economic and social interaction," consisting "of both informal constraints (sanctions, taboos, customs, traditions, and codes of conduct), and formal rules (constitutions, laws, property rights)."[159] Ethnographic narratives are particularly valuable for analyzing the structure of society and thereby assessing the various types of rules proposed by the state at the border. "Institutions," as North contends, "have been

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[158] Elsner, "Adam Smith's Model of the Origins and Emergence of Institutions," 191.

[159] Douglass C. North, "Institutions," *Journal of Economic Perspective* 5, no. 1 (1991): 97–112. http://pubs.aeaweb.org/doi/pdfplus/10.1257/jep.5.1.97.

devised by human beings to create order and reduce uncertainty in exchange."[160] While formal rules are more straightforward and often are written down, an institution's informal rules require observation and more critical study of a social order to determine how behavior is governed.

Institutions put forth rules that influence social behavior and perceptions. As Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio argue, "institutional arrangements and social processes matter."[161] These political and social structures are especially important to any comprehensive account of conflict and stability within the borderlands of the Ferghana Valley. Drawing from recent developments in "new institutionalism," Powell and DiMaggio insist that "individual preferences and such basic categories of thought as the self, social action, the state, and citizenship are shaped by institutional forces."[162] As discussed in the next section, influence among the border institution, social behavior, and local perceptions is multidirectional.

2. Conceiving of the Border Institution

As previously established, a border is an institution. Therefore, analysis of borders can encompass the various tools and concepts used to understand and evaluate other political institutions. Before discussing institutional stability and legitimacy, this section considers more deeply the consequences of thinking about borders as institutions. Consistent with themes in past and contemporary border studies that explain borders as constructed and artificial, Hanson suggests, "Like all political institutions, they [the borders] do not emerge 'naturally' out of any preordained process of social evolution; rather, state borders must be designed and enforced by specific actors in specific historical contexts."[163] The historical context is especially important for the Ferghana Valley because borders were the result of an almost purely scientific design based on the ethno-linguistic ordering of the early Soviet planners. Additionally, the borders in the

160 North, "Institutions," 97–112.

161 Walter W. Powell and Paul DiMaggio, eds., *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 3.

162 Powell and DiMaggio, *New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, 3.

163 Hanson, "Russia, Ukraine, and the Borders of Europe," 11.

Ferghana Valley have never been static but have always been changing, the result of regional, national, and local influences.

As institutions, borders are historical and sociological, evolving over time through the social interactions of people. Brunet-Jailly notes that borders are made through a historical process, "which at a given time in history and within a given space—are economically, politically and culturally embedded."[164] According to Brunet-Jailly, "there is a wealth of scholarly characterizations of borders, boundaries and borderlands, where non-central-state actors, pluri-national communities, and stateless nations perforate borders or undermine the integrity of state borders because of ethnic, religious, social and economic identities."[165] Brunet-Jailly suggests that border studies should "focus on the agency of borders that is the activities of social, economic and political individuals and the processes of production and re-production of borders—*the bordering and de-bordering praxis*."[166] These characterizations reinforce the idea that political borders as institutions evolve over time through social and economic interaction.

Beyond functioning as a central feature of the state, borders define the people by defining the territory. Borders are part of multidimensional state processes of de-territorializing and re-territorializing people and places.[167] As described by Brunet-Jailly, "Borders are not just hard territorial lines—they are institutions that result from bordering policies—they are thus about people."[168] Mostly, borders differentiate the people from outsiders, as other political institutions distinguish citizens from foreigners. "For most settled territories," acknowledged Brunet-Jailly, borders "are predominantly about inclusion and exclusion, as they are woven into varied cultural, economic and political fabrics."[169] By their nature as barriers of exclusion and inclusion, borders are central to

164 Brunet-Jailly, "Special Section," 3.

165 Brunet-Jailly, "Theorizing Borders," (note 38) p. 639; italics in the original.

166 Brunet-Jailly, "Special Section," 3.

167 Jussi P. Laine, "The Multiscalar Production of Borders," *Geopolitics* 21, no. 3 (2016), 465–482, doi: 10.1080/14650045.2016.1195132.

168 Brunet-Jailly, "Special Section," 1, 3.

169 Ibid., 3.

regional prospects for stability. Wherever there is a group of people, there are others who are excluded. This exclusion or inclusion process through the border—especially hardening—is a potential source of conflict and instability.

The relationship between the border institution and the borderland people is also mutually interactive. Borders between two states "are the outcome of the continual interactions and intersections between the actions of people (agency) within the constraints and limits placed by contextual and structural factors (structure)."[170] As Elsner and North pointed out, a successful institution increases order and stability through rules that govern behavior. These rules influence behavior and shape perceptions,[171] as well as have tangible effects on the social and economic dynamics of the borderland. The border can negatively affect nearly every aspect of life when experienced by local communities as imposing, while the border can also shape local perceptions of the state and political authority. While the border can degrade everyday life by restricting social and economic relationships, local perceptions can also shape the formulation and implementation of border rules. In other words, the structural and institutional nature of the border is shaped—inferring from Brunet-Jailly's understanding of border production and evolution—by the behavior and perceptions of the population.

3. From Border Institutions to Relative Stability

Stable borders are themselves stabilizing **in** the greater geopolitical and sociological context of a region. As a border institution effectively increases order and decreases uncertainty, according to North, regional stability should also logically increase.[172] Drawing on Max Weber's earlier articulation of institutions, Hanson argues that in the context of borders, "where institutions are stable and predictable, everyday decision making will typically be governed by habit and short-term instrumental

[170] Brunet-Jailly, "Special Section," 3.

[171] For an in-depth analysis of the relationship between institutional rules and perceptions in the post-Soviet context, see Pauline Jones Luong, *Institutional Change and Political Continuity in Post-Soviet Central Asia: Power, Perceptions, and Pacts* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[172] For a general reference for reducing uncertainty and increasing stability through institutions, see Douglass Cecil North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 3.

rationality."[173] Beyond everyday habits, this short-term instrumental rationality can also be understood as behavior according to interests. The unique context of the Ferghana Valley—specifically, the construction of hardened borders after a long history of open borders as well as the self-fulfilling "danger narrative" that reinforces the perception of uncertainty—arguably challenges local perceptions and shapes behavior that would otherwise be dictated by habit or rational choice. These historical and contextual circumstances—potential factors of instability—may threaten how people have lived and expect to live in the Ferghana Valley borderlands.

Drawing from concepts of institutional theory, the relationship between institutions and rules is also an important aspect affecting the survival and stability of an institution. John W. Meyer and Brian Rowan considered how "institutional rules function as myths which organizations incorporate, gaining legitimacy, resources, stability, and enhanced survival prospects."[174] Other scholars have observed, based on conclusions drawn from Meyer and Rowan, that institutions that "fail to verify their activities against legitimacy are vulnerable to claims of negligence and necessity."[175] The role that perceptions of legitimacy play is also not to be underestimated. "The perception of legitimacy is essential for social stability," argues Kylie Fisk. In his view, "when it exists in the thinking of people and groups, it leads them to defer to authorities, institutions, and social arrangements as right and proper."[176] When legitimacy is weak or lacking, institutional authority is undermined and stability is threatened.[177] Based on a study of post-conflict regions in Asia, Fisk concludes that legitimacy is "essential for citizen

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[173] Hanson, *Post-Imperial Democracies*, 249.

[174] John W. Meyer, and Brian Rowan, "Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure As Myth and Ceremony," *American Journal of Sociology* 83, no. 2 (1977): 340, doi:10.1086/226550.

[175] Amisha M. Patel, Robina J. Xavier, and Glen Broom, "Toward a Model of Organizational Legitimacy in Public Relations Theory and Practice," in *Proceedings International Communication Association Conference* (2005), 14–15, New York, USA, http://eprints.qut.edu.au/10132/1/10132.pdf.

[176] Kylie Fisk, Adrian Cherney, Matthew Hornsey, and Andrew Smith, "Using Computer-Aided Content Analysis to Map a Research Domain: A Case Study of Institutional Legitimacy in Postconflict East Timor," *Sage Open* 2, no. 4 (2012): 2, doi:10.1177/2158244012467788.

[177] See Kylie Fisk, "Rebuilding Institutional Legitimacy in Post-conflict Societies: A Case Study of Nepal," PhD Thesis, 2015, The University of Queensland, 17.

compliance and long-term stability."[178] Popular deference to the institutional authority of a border also logically reduces the operating costs of enforcing the border because the baseline population respects and honors the border rules. Therefore, the state has more resources to commit to actual security threats, while also minimizing state intrusions into everyday life.

B. LEGITIMACY OF BORDERS: DEFINITIONS, PERCEPTIONS, AND EVALUATION

This section addresses institutional legitimacy and the related methods by which states gain social obedience to institutional rules. Institutional legitimacy is defined as *popular acceptance of the institution's right to exercise authority*, especially in the form of rules and requests.[179] Beyond the use of raw power, the concept of legitimacy is a particular form of political authority that allows states—and by extension, their institutions—to govern effectively, as well as to persist with popular support. Following this definition, additional concepts of legitimacy are explored and the role of local perceptions of border legitimacy is considered in relation to institutional stability.

Scholars from numerous disciplines have explored the concept of legitimacy, including those working within international relations, comparative politics, sociology, psychology, and political philosophy. International relations literature seeks to understand international legitimacy as an aspect of interstate relations. Scholars of comparative politics and political philosophy often analyze legitimacy in terms of democracy and the consent of the people.[180] This approach is not easily transferable to understanding legitimacy in autocratic regimes, such as Uzbekistan. Some of the more

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[178] See Fisk, "Rebuilding Institutional Legitimacy in Post-conflict Societies," 169.

[179] This definition is adapted from peacekeeping literature that defined legitimacy as the "popular acceptance of a governing authority's right to exercise that authority." See Eileen F. Babbitt, Ian Johnstone, and Dyan Mazurana, "Building Legitimacy in Conflict-affected and Fragile States," *Policy Brief* 1, no. 1 (December 2016), Institute for Human Security, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, 2, www. fletcher.tufts.edu/Institute-for-Human-Security/Research/Building-State-Legitimacy.

[180] For early discussions on legitimacy, consent, and democracy, see Seymour Martin Lipset, *Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy* (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1959); Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1960); David Easton, *A Systems Analysis of Political Life* (New York: Wiley, 1965); and David Easton, *A Framework for Political Analysis* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1965).

recent advances the study of legitimacy has been in criminology and psychology, both heavily influenced from earlier sociology scholars, such as structural functionalist Talcott Parsons.[181] A useful conception of legitimacy that pertains to borders and local perceptions ultimately incorporates contributions from multiple scholarly disciplines, while accounting for the philosophical nuances that make legitimacy such a powerful force.

While a comprehensive review of legitimacy as a concept is beyond the scope of this thesis, political philosophy is an appropriate starting point for understanding its value when applied to borders and stability. Political thought has often problematized legitimacy.[182] French–American lawyer and political theorist Jean-Marc Coicaud asserts, "Legitimacy is essential to the operation of political life."[183] In other words, legitimacy is a question for theorists with real-world application: "What makes a government legitimate?"[184] American political philosopher Peter G. Stillman recalls just some of the notable scholars that considered the concept of legitimacy—from Plato and Aristotle to Rousseau, and later Max Weber, Hannah Arendt, Robert Dahl, David Easton, and

[181] Research on legitimacy from the disciplines of criminology, psychology, and behavioral science has grown over the last two decades, building on previous work in the field of sociology. For a criminology study on public perceptions of legitimacy, see Justice Tankebe, "Viewing Things Differently: The Dimensions of Public Perceptions of Police Legitimacy," *Criminology* 51, no. 1 (2013): 103–135. doi:10.1111/j.1745-9125.2012.00291.x; see also, Devon Johnson, Edward R. Maguire, Joseph B. Kuhns, "Public Perceptions of the Legitimacy of the Law and Legal Authorities: Evidence from the Caribbean," *Law and Society Review* 48, no. 4 (2014): 947–78, doi:10.1111/lasr.12102. From a psychology perspective, see Tom R. Tyler, "The Psychology of Legitimacy: A Relational Perspective on Voluntary Deference to Authorities," *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 1, no. 4 (1997): 323–45. From a behavioral sciences perspective, see Margaret Levi, Audrey Sacks, Tom Tyler, "Conceptualizing Legitimacy, Measuring Legitimating Beliefs," *American Behavioral Scientist* 53, no. 3 (2009): 354–75, doi:10.1177/0002764209338797. From a sociological perspective on institutions, see Talcott Parsons, *The Social System* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1951). Parsons was influenced by earlier sociologists, including Émile Durkheim and Max Weber. See also Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, vol. 1 and 2 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2013), especially Volume 1, Part One, "Basic Sociological Terms," and Section III, "The Types of Legitimacy," 212–301; volume 2, Part Two, XVI, "The City (Non-legitimate Domination), 1212–1236.

[182] Peter G. Stillman, "The Concept of Legitimacy," *Polity* 7, no. 1 (1974): 32, doi:10.2307/3234268.

[183] Jean-Marc Coicaud, *Legitimacy and Politics: A Contribution to the Study of Political Right and Political Responsibility*, trans. David Ames Curtis (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[184] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Book I, Chapter 1, quoted in Stillman, "The Concept of Legitimacy," 33.

Seymour Lipset.[185] Other commentators on the subject might place Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jeremy Bentham, and John Rawls at the top of their lists when discussing notable theorists who have pondered the concept of legitimacy. What can be gained from listing these notable scholars? The answer resides in the remarkable diversity of thought stemming from how each philosopher asked questions regarding state legitimacy. Because legitimacy continues to be of primary concern to political theorists, this section addresses some of the definitions and descriptions that have immediate pertinence to this thesis.

1. Definition and Distinctions

This thesis uses a definition of legitimacy that is subjective based on perceptions of rightness rather than an objective, universalized normative recognition. Defined in the political sense, "legitimacy is the recognition of the right to govern."[186] Consistent with the earlier definition of institutional legitimacy, this definition emphasizes the subjectivity of the governed through elements of perception and recognition, while underscoring questions of the rightness of an authority. First, legitimacy depends on recognition of the governed, which is described later as the social perception of local borderland people about the border institution. Second—although legitimacy is not based on a universal moral norm—it is at least partially normative, having to do with the institution's right to govern a population. From this right of authority stems the sense of justice or injustice associated with legitimate and illegitimate authority. Finally, there is the basic question, what state or institution is governing whom? The simple answer is that the border institution governs the people living near and crossing the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border in the Ferghana Valley. The border institution, therefore, gains or loses subjective legitimacy—at least in part—through local perceptions of its authority to make rules and requests.

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[185] Stillman, "The Concept of Legitimacy," 33, 39. In particular, Hannah Arendt's essay on "What is Authority?" is useful for understanding legitimacy in terms of authority, as related to political philosophy. See Hannah Arendt, *The Portable Hannah Arendt*, edited by Peter. Baehr (New York: Penguin Books, 2000), 462–507. In another book, Arendt draws a difference between considering legitimacy in terms of "rightful authority" and that of "interpretations of action itself." See Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 228.

[186] Coicaud, *Legitimacy and Politics*, 10.

Legitimacy is naturally related to the concepts of power and authority. Drawing from a tension addressed by Raymond Aron in *Democracy and Totalitarianism: A Theory of Political Systems*, Jean-Marc Coicaud argues, "to justify power and obedience simultaneously is the first issue involved in the question of legitimacy."[187] The insight here is that authority is distinct from the raw use of power. Certain methods of state power, such as the use of violence and coercion, do not require legitimate authority to enforce a rule. Such methods, in fact, are illegitimate by definition unless employed in the service of justice. French statesman and political philosopher Jacques Maritain upholds this distinction that "authority and power are two different things."[188] Specifically, "authority means right," while "power is the force by means of which" a state imposes its rules.[189] The difference is important for Maritain because "power without authority is tyranny."[190] Tyranny is the exercise of pure power without the rule of law and the consent of those governed. Pure power is therefore illegitimate. Both Aron and Maritain lived through the tyrannical violence of the early twentieth century and were interested in the concept of legitimacy, and especially, how power and authority were legitimized through ideologies.

Consequently, coercive power is unstable. More specifically, while coercion through the use of force is a historic reality and legitimate when applied justly, the use of pure power represents illegitimate authority. This illegitimacy of some forms of coercion leads to institutional instability. While not denying the reality and influence of coercive power, the question is whether such illegitimate authority can endure or survive without benefiting from alternative forms of authority, such as interest or legitimacy.

Canadian-born American historian William H. McNeill argues that "throughout nearly all civilized history, in any given place, a particular group of armed men did in fact extract unrequited rents and taxes from their subjects until another similar group came

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187 Coicaud, *Legitimacy and Politics*, 10.

188 Jacques Maritain, *Man and the State* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1998), 126.

189 Ibid., 126–127.

190 Ibid., 126–127.

along and displaced them."[191] Armed men do, in fact, force compliance and therefore, influence social and political behavior for at least as long as that threat of force is perceived as credible. In other words, coercive authority, without recourse to justice-based authority and despite being illegitimate, does force people to comply with institutional rules and to accept an established institutional order. Compliance that endures is arguably based on legitimacy. British-born American political scientist Bruce Gilley notes that "empirical studies have confirmed the centrality of legitimacy beliefs to citizen compliance."[192] Despite the fact that "armed men demanding submission do not offer their victims much choice,"[193] the population's compliance is arguably only extracted through either the immediate presence of force or the real and perceived threat of force. An illegitimate authority must eventually depend on alternative means of authority, risk loss of consent and eventual rebellion, or fall to another authority that exercises more power over the governed. Ultimately, institutions depending on legitimate authority and the consent of the governed are more stable than despotic regimes, a fact which affects the social and political stability within the region.

Hannah Arendt suggests that confusion between violence and authority is common and leads to a fundamental misunderstanding about legitimacy in the political order. "Since authority always demands obedience," Arendt notes, "it is commonly mistaken for some form of power or violence."[194] Furthermore, argues Arendt, "authority precludes the use of external means of coercion; where force is used, authority itself has failed."[195] For Arendt, "authority has proved to be the most stable element,"[196] which makes it all the more important to understand how authority is perceived as legitimate.

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191 William H. McNeill, "Territorial States Buried Too Soon," *Mershon International Studies Review* 41, no. 2 (1997): 271, doi:10.2307/222670.

192 Bruce Gilley, *The Right to Rule: How States Win and Lose Legitimacy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 149.

193 McNeill, "Territorial States Buried Too Soon," 271.

194 Arendt, *Portable Hannah Arendt*, 463.

195 Ibid.

196 Ibid.

Legitimate authority, according to Arendt, provides for a more stable regime than the use of force.

The recognition of the governed is obtained through the process of legitimation. By one account, legitimation is "the process whereby power gains acceptance in the eyes of those who are governed by it, by generating a belief in its legitimacy."[197] Similarly, German political scientist Johannes Gerschewski defines legitimation "as the process of gaining support, which is based on an empirical, Weberian tradition of 'legitimacy belief.'"[198] Neither of these two definitions proposes a legitimation based on mere technical legality without normative standing among the population. For British international theorist Adam Watson, legitimacy is defined as "the acceptance of authority, the right of a rule or a ruler to be obeyed, as distinguished from the power to coerce."[199] Like Arendt, Watson argues that the "power exercised by compulsion or the threat of it"[200] is not legitimate authority. Watson also notes the relative importance of individual perceptions of institutional authority. "Legitimacy," Watson suggests, "is the lubricating oil of international societies, and especially of arrangements for international order."[201] These observations are transferable to the state and local level, as legitimacy applies to the border institution, "lubricating" relationships between different groups of people, as long as the state's authority is honored.

The normative component of legitimacy is crucial to understanding group and individual perceptions of institutional legitimacy. Beyond feelings, the normative foundation of legitimacy—as described earlier as a sense of justice—is also characteristic of a deeply held belief. According to English international relations theorist Martin Wight, legitimacy is "briefly described as moral acceptability," albeit "an elusive and

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197 Roger Scruton, *The Palgrave Macmillan Dictionary of Political Thought*, 3rd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 389.

198 Johannes Gerschewski, "The Three Pillars of Stability: Legitimation, Repression, and Co-Optation in Autocratic Regimes," *Democratization* 20, no. 1 (2013): 18n29, doi:10.1080/13510347.2013.738860.

199 Adam Watson, *The Evolution of International Society: A Comparative Historical Analysis*, reissue with a new introduction by Barry Buzan and Richard Little (New York: Routlegde, 2009), 13.

200 Ibid., 13.

201 Ibid., 248.

nebulous notion, on the frontiers of morality and law."[202] This vague or "nebulous notion" of legitimacy can be accounted for in the diverse definitions catalogued by various disciplines and within each specialty that claims to appreciate the role of legitimacy. Wight also attaches normative and legal components to his definition of legitimacy. German-born American political philosopher Eric Voegelin also suggests a concept of obedience to authority in relation to legality and questions of rightness. Specifically, Voegelin thoughtfully considers the difference between "belief in the normativity and the legitimacy of commands" as two reasons for obedience that are not necessarily equivalent.[203] Voegelin's assumption is that "a command can be deemed legitimate and at the same time mandate something that, in the opinion of the obeying parties, should not happen."[204] Furthermore, "the legitimacy of a command might appear very dubious to its recipient, even though he approves of its content."[205] This internal tension within authority is a source of instability to the institution as well as to the social and political order if not reconciled peacefully.

2. Systemizing of Legitimacy

Stillman provides his own answer to Rousseau's question about state legitimacy. "A government is legitimate," asserts Stillman, "if and only if the results of governmental output are compatible with the value pattern of the society."[206] Two important aspects of this definition relate to this thesis. First, there is the notion that legitimacy is linked to "government output." As Stillman observes, this is "not only the promulgated laws but any action of the government that has an effect on the society." Second, Stillman sets forth the idea of "the value pattern of the society," which is based on "eight Lasswellean values" from Harold Lasswell's 1950 study *Power and Society*.[207] Departing from

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[202] Martin Wight, "International Legitimacy," *International Relations* 4, no. 1 (1972): 1, http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/004711787200400101

[203] Eric Voegelin, *The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin, Published Essays, 1929–1933,* Vol. 8, ed. M. J. Hanak, Jodi Cockerill (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003), 128.

[204] Ibid.

[205] Ibid.

[206] Stillman, "The Concept of Legitimacy," 39.

[207] Ibid., 32.

Stillman's overt use of Lasswell's work, this thesis prefers a meaning of "the value pattern of the society" as synonymous with a society's cultural context.

The society's cultural context is also represented by the "community," which embodies the relationships and collective will of the people that consent to an authority. Explaining the legitimate sources of authority in society, American sociologist Robert A. Nisbet is particularly helpful in augmenting Stillman in this regard. "Authority," argues Nisbet, "is legitimate when it proceeds from the customs and traditions of a people, when it is formed by innumerable links in a chain that begins with the family, rises through community and class, and culminates in the large society."[208] A person's relationship within the community to the state is a central theme in much of Nisbet's work.[209] For Nisbet, authority is "rooted in statuses, functions, and allegiances which are the components of any association," which "is indeed indistinguishable from organization."[210] Moreover, Nisbet suggests that "authority not undergirded by the sense of recognized function is notoriously tenuous."[211] In other words, legitimate authority ascends from deep within society but also from a verifiable function within that society. Agreeing with Alexis de Tocqueville and Lord Acton, Nisbet emphasizes that "authority must be closely united to objectives and functions."[212] Otherwise, the authority of that institution would not only be fragile but also dependent merely on power.[213]

With respect to the Ferghana Valley, the "the value pattern of the society" comes into contact with state-supported border hardening. Stillman argues that government action is not just about the "output itself," but its "results" and "impacts."[214] The impacts

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[208] Robert A. Nisbet, "Conservatism and Sociology," *American Journal of Sociology* 58, no. 2 (1952): 172, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2772188.

[209] For a deeper discussion on the relationship of the individual to the community and state, see Robert Nisbet, *The Quest for Community: A Study in the Ethics of Order and Freedom* (Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2010), originally published by Oxford University Press in 1953. For specific references, see Nisbet's explanation on pages xxvi-xxvii, as well as Part Two.

[210] Nisbet, *The Quest for Community*, xxvi.

[211] Robert A. Nisbet, *The Degradation of the Academic* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2004), 40.

[212] Nisbet, *The Quest for Community*, xxvii.

[213] Ibid., xxvii.

[214] Stillman, "The Concept of Legitimacy," 40–41.

of border hardening on the local population are central to understanding how perceptions of legitimacy in the borderlands either undermine or support political and social stability. British international relations scholar Chris Rumford notes that "local cultures in border regions are important in the sense that borders are places where the people interface with the state."[215] Rumford further argues that "the state imposes itself upon a territory and its population, whose cultural values and local activities may give legitimacy to the border or, alternatively, may erode that legitimacy."[216] The value pattern of the local populations within the Ferghana Valley includes a culture formed over centuries without a significant sense of nationalized borders. The results of state action are then perceived through the local culture and its values.

The legitimacy of unilateral border hardening along the Uzbekistan—Kyrgyzstan border is rooted in the results and impacts of the border hardening. Stillman also holds that impacts of "government output" must be "compatible with" social values or otherwise cause tension.[217] Therefore, illegitimacy can result in institutional instability when government policy and social values—which Stillman emphatically extends to the values of groups and individuals[218]—contradict one another. Stillman distinguishes between traditional definitions of legitimacy and his formulation, repeating his observation that value patterns include what amount to group or individual perceptions.[219] The question then becomes "defining legitimacy" in accordance "with which group (or individual or source) decides whether a government is legitimate."[220] While this is a valid criticism of concentrating on findings below the state-level in an analysis of social value patterns, this thesis avoids the ambiguity of "which group?" because the specific focus is on the borderland people in relation to the legitimacy of the border institution. Stillman focused on studying the society at large and answering

215 Chris Rumford, "Introduction: Citizens and Borderwork in Europe," in *Citizens and Borderwork in Contemporary Europe*, edited by Chris Rumford (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2013), 5.

216 Ibid.

217 Stillman, "The Concept of Legitimacy," 41.

218 Ibid., 42.

219 Ibid., 49.

220 Ibid., 36.

Rousseau's question related to the legitimacy of the government as a whole. This thesis, however, maintains that group or individual perceptions at the local borderlands are relevant, while conceding with Stillman the absence of any final arbiter of the accuracy of rival group perceptions.[221] Philosophical questions related to the accuracy and objectivity of perceptions or the universality of norms—while related to legitimacy—are beyond the scope of this thesis.

Further worth is found in Stillman's expanded definition of legitimacy. Clarifying even further, Stillman asserts, "legitimacy is the compatibility of the results of governmental output with the value patterns of the relevant systems."[222] This definition systematizes and objectifies legitimacy rather than making it a tool of public opinion or an indicator of public feeling.[223] The purpose of gathering perceptions of the border's legitimacy—instead of considering these views as mere opinions or feelings—is to find within these historical narratives a system of social values. Similarly, German constructivist Friedrich Kratochwil suggests that legitimacy is "not dealing with the coincidence of personal preferences."[224] This systemization of values suggests that there is also a systemization of perceptions of legitimacy. By this value system, the governed weigh government action and assess its legitimacy.

Returning to the idea of a value system, Stillman recognizes that a state has many such systems, at different levels, with often-contradictory values. Stillman also assumes that "legitimacy is always a matter of degree," but he asserts that "legitimacy is nonetheless a desirable property from the point of view of both the government and the society" because it reduces state and social costs of interaction when legitimacy is high.[225] Conversely, when legitimacy is low, either governance and social costs are high or the institution loses support.

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221 Stillman, "The Concept of Legitimacy," 49.

222 Ibid., 42.

223 Ibid.

224 Friedrich Kratochwil, "On Legitimacy," *International Relations* 20, no. 3 (2006): 303, doi:10.1177/0047117806066706.

225 Stillman, "The Concept of Legitimacy," 43.

Most scholarly literature on perceptions of legitimacy focuses directly on the state or the authority of individual leaders; similar conclusions about institutional stability, however, can be drawn concerning borders. Perceptions of legitimacy are a crucial variable for institutional stability, whether by preserving, maintaining, or undermining the authority of the institution to promulgate and enforce rules. American social psychologists John T. Jost and Brenda Major contend that "one of the ultimate sources of the state's legitimacy, which underlies [the] citizen's implicit consent to its demands, is the extent to which the state reflects the identity and meets the needs and interests of its citizens."[226] While this conclusion is similar to evaluating the performance of the border, consent is linked with higher perceptions of identity and social norms.

As Jost and Major assert, "it is now a well-established fact in sociology and political science that leaders and authorities are effective to the extent that they are perceived as having legitimate authority and acting in accordance with prevailing norms of appropriate conduct."[227] Furthermore, Jost and Major hypothesize that "the converse also seems to be true: when states and leaders are perceived to be illegitimate, their power begins to erode very quickly in the absence of physical force."[228] In other words, when people perceive an institution's rules as acting in accordance with their social and cultural norms, less physical force (i.e., coercive force through illegitimate methods of enforcement) is needed to garner support. "The maintenance of legitimacy, once a state has been established and is running its normal course," suggest Jost and Major, "depends primarily on the perception that certain mechanisms for legitimate rule exist, that they are intact, and that they are being used as necessary."[229] Political institutions must not only factor perceptions of legitimacy into early policy decisions but also continue to assess the impact of the rules on the population's perceptions in order to maintain support.

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226 John T. Jost and Brenda Major, *The Psychology of Legitimacy: Emerging Perspectives on Ideology, Justice, and Intergroup Relations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 57.

227 Ibid., 4.

228 Ibid.

229 Ibid., 71.

3. Legitimacy and Stability Related to Policy

Policymakers and scholars alike are increasingly recognizing the relevance of legitimacy to the promotion of peace and stability. Practical research that supports sound policy bridges the gap between the academic and policymaking environments. Retired Admiral James Stavridis, now the Dean of Tufts University's Fletcher School, suggests that greater insight into legitimacy "might help us to understand many of the security threats we see unfolding now in real time—like ISIS, which styles itself an Islamic 'State,' or the illegal annexation of Crimea, or the next break away 'nation' carved out of a European power."[230] As part of a one million dollar grant awarded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York aimed at better understanding the role of legitimacy, the goal of the Tufts research is "to develop strategies to enhance the legitimacy of fragile states through research and outreach efforts aimed at the media and policymakers."[231] Specifically, the program investigated the "indicators for state legitimacy across four sectors: political, economic, justice and security."[232] The study is unique because it focuses on legitimacy concerning these four elements of society and encourages understanding about legitimacy among policymakers and the media. Concluding after two years, the study published five research papers, eight policy briefs, and two occasional papers that addressed concepts of legitimacy and aimed to inform policy.

The study concisely defined "political legitimacy as popular acceptance of a governing authority's right to exercise that authority."[233] This definition again emphasizes authority and right as two primary elements of legitimacy, as well as identifying who is judging the legitimacy (popular acceptance) of the governing regime. Consistent with this definition, the study's final Policy Brief identified three elements of political legitimacy. Beginning with the nature of legitimacy itself, the authors of the study described "legitimacy as a subjective concept, meaning it is about perceptions and

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230 Tufts University, "Fletcher Faculty Bridging The Gap: Carnegie Corporation Awards $1 Million to The Fletcher School for Research and Outreach on State Legitimacy," *Fletcher Features*, 3 September 2014, www.fletcher.tufts.edu/news-and-media/2014/09/23/fletcher-awarded-carnegie-grant.

231 Ibid.

232 Ibid.

233 Babbitt, Johnstone, and Mazurana, "Building Legitimacy in Conflict-affected and Fragile States," 1.

beliefs, not objective, normative standards that apply universally."[234] The questions pertain to "whether governing authorities are perceived to be worthy of support; not whether they satisfy some pre-determined set of criteria.[235] While Stillman represents an attempt to objectify legitimacy, this thesis adopts the subjective concept of legitimacy advanced by the authors of the Tufts study. Additionally, legitimacy is concerned with support for the governing authority and whether those governed approve of the authority.

The second element of legitimacy "puts the focus on internal perceptions of legitimacy — whether and to what extent those who are subject to authority believe it to be legitimate."[236] Not only are perceptions the bellwether for gauging support, but also the emphasis is on identifying the support of the internal population over elite or foreign perceptions of the government's legitimacy. Stillman recognized that one challenging aspect of subjective legitimacy was determining whose perceptions mattered. Another challenge to analyzing legitimacy is determining to what degree legitimacy matters. British scholar Dominik Zaum argues that "a state's legitimacy is not a question of degree, but is inherently contested, as the social norms and shared interests against which different social groups judge these legitimacy claims are likely to differ."[237] This thesis suggests that legitimacy is both a matter of degree (i.e., how much support there is for the governing authority) as well as a matter of relative legitimacy among differing (although not always competing) social groups.

Finally, the third element of legitimacy from the Tufts study contends that analysis should extend beyond the "state institutions at the national level" because "local levels of governance and non-state actors may also accrue legitimacy."[238] Perceptively, the study indicates that "the various levels of authority may compete for legitimacy in the

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[234] Babbitt, Johnstone, and Mazurana, "Building Legitimacy in Conflict-affected and Fragile States," 2.

[235] Ibid.

[236] Ibid.

[237] Dominik Zaum, "Legitimacy, Statebuilding and Conflict," *GSDRC Professional Development Reading Pack* no. 11 (2015), Birmingham, UK, University of Birmingham, commissioned by the UK Government's Department for International Development, http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/reading-packs/legitimacystatebuildingconflictrp.pdf.

[238] Babbitt, Johnstone, and Mazurana, "Building Legitimacy in Conflict-affected and Fragile States," 2.

eyes of a population, or they may be mutually reinforcing."[239] Institutions creating rules and constructing order are at every level, including above and below the state. These institutions can be associated with a government or independent of a government; they may also be secular or religious in orientation. When analyzing the border institution in the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan borderlands, one challenge is identifying how local perceptions may not only be different between various groups, but also blend institutions across a single frame. If a person is speaking about the injustice of the border post or the customs agent, he may be driven also by a lack of meaningful work or education for his children. In other words, perceptions of border legitimacy are not formed in a vacuum but are influenced by perceptions of the worthiness of other institutions.

4. Legitimacy and Local Perceptions

Local perceptions of legitimacy are relevant to borders because if the local people believe that only open borders are legitimate, obedience to hardened borders requires enforcement through coercion. In other words, obedience or compliance is almost exclusively an issue for hardened borders, whereas open borders demand less or nearly nothing from people crossing. Similarly, any political institution that demands a specific action or conformity to a certain order requires either obedience or compliance. While willing obedience is achieved through legitimate authority, which causes people to acknowledge the authority as right, forceful coercion gains compliance through force and illegitimate methods.

Belief in a border's legitimacy increases obedience from those observing the border's demands. People, therefore, are more likely to disregard or disobey the border if the state loses its capacity to enforce the commands or in places and scenarios where the enforcement through coercion is weakened. Accordingly, the stability of the border institution would be undermined, also diminishing the border's ability to achieve one of its goals: security against non-traditional threats, such as drug smuggling, human trafficking, or international terrorism. The central value of local perceptions of the border is to legitimize the authority of the border institution, thereby increasing obedience

[239] Babbitt, Johnstone, and Mazurana, "Building Legitimacy in Conflict-affected and Fragile States," 2.

without force and diminishing the need for coercive methods of compliance. Over dependence on the use of force to gain compliance thus drags the border into a circular process of undermining the border's legitimacy, increasing the need for coercive state enforcement along the border, and perpetuating the perception of the border as illegitimate.

Borders are political institutions that command the obedience or compliance of people. Making rules implies a certain amount of institutional authority. Central to any rule making is the imposition of will upon the agent. The border institution commands obedience or compliance with its rules, described here as the border structure of its commands, restrictions, and taxes, and (among other impacts) the modification of the geopolitical space.

Border making is also a complex term that needs defining. Perceptions about border legitimacy usually include narratives of how the border was drawn, constructed, and reinforced. Some confusion might arise from different disciplines defining border making as a formal state act, an informal process, or the accumulated consequence of exchanges over centuries. Border making is defined here as the state production of international borders, through either the moving or redrawing of existing borders or the construction of entirely new borders. Hardening is a formal process of border making, albeit not always necessary.

Border making also includes informal processes that involve changing social, cultural, and geographic factors. Historian Sabri Ateş demonstrates both formal and informal border making with his account of the Ottoman–Iranian border, a process of formation that occurred over centuries.[240] Considering boundary construction from the periphery of the borderland rather than from a state-centric perspective, historian Peter Sahlins recounts "invention of a national boundary line and the making of Frenchmen and Spaniards" in a history of Pyrenees communities.[241] One of the purposes of such a

[240] See Sabri Ateş, *Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands: Making a Boundary*, 1843–1914 (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2013).

[241] Peter Sahlins, *Boundaries: The Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees* (Berkeley: University of California Press).

historical account of a border is to understand the "relative 'fossilization'" of some borders, as opposed to the deliberate drawing or construction of a specific boundary or otherwise contentious border at other places.[242]

Since border making is a multi-disciplinary and multi-stage process, the responsibility of delineation and demarcation often defaults to specialists of various border commissions who act in support of a nation's interests. Geographers and cartographers are just some of the types of professionals involved in border making; others might include members of the military, political and diplomatic representatives, lawyers, state bureaucrats, and local or regional representatives.

Beyond acts that materialize or rematerialize, borders can also be opened or erased entirely. This process might have profound impacts on the perceptions of borderland groups, depending on potential claims over sovereignty that may conflict. The open borders of the Schengen Area are examples of the opening-up of borders, but events like the destruction of the Berlin War in 1989 are even more dramatic examples of the removal of a political border that not only became a social and economic border, but also symbolized the Cold War for nearly three decades (1961–1989).

Since borders manage flows of people and goods, their opening or disappearing has significant cultural, social, economic, and political consequences. Another form of the opening of borders is selective management, illustrated with passport regimes or other forms of traveler identification restrictions that allow only certain individuals or groups to pass, while simultaneously limiting the movement of others. Whether made, changed, opened, erased, or selectively managed, borders deeply impact how people of that territory and outsiders see the geopolitical space. Even with a border changing or disappearing, Israeli political geographer David Newman suggests that borders do not "disappear altogether," but leave behind a residue that might continue to influence how people perceive the territory in the future.[243] Asking, "Borders for whom?" and the related question, "who benefits and who loses from enclosing, or being enclosed by

[242] Sahlins, *Boundaries*, 2.

[243] Newman, "On Borders and Power," 23.

others?,"[244] Newman links border making with state authority to enact, institutionalize, and change rules.

C. BORDER HARDENING

This section elaborates on the definition and characteristics of border hardening, links the concept of legitimacy with hardening, and considers stability in light of the hardening process.

1. Defining Border Hardening

What is border hardening? While some borders function as a bridge to other communities, the conventional view and function of borders have been defensive, primarily as a barrier or filter. More recently, borders have been securitized and criminalized not for traditional defensive purposes but to counter non-traditional security threats such as terrorism, transnational crime, and cross-border smuggling of people, weapons, and drugs.[245] Border hardening and demarcation efforts are central to these border changes and directly affect the political, cultural, and socio-economic dynamics of the border region.

Reece Jones argues that border hardening, one of the most visible markers that define a border, was legitimized because of security concerns in the post-9/11 global environment.[246] Elisabeth Vallet refers to the speed at which global walls and fences were built following 9/11, suggesting "a latent tendency that predated" post-9/11 calls to protect against globalized terrorism.[247] Multiple experts argue that the purpose of these new physical markers is not to defend against a military threat, but rather to guard against

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[244] Newman, "On Borders and Power," 22.

[245] For a description of the securitization of borders through criminalizing "illegal" border crossings, see J. Nevins, *Operation Gatekeeper: The Rise of the "Illegal Alien" and the Making of the U.S.-Mexico Boundary* (London: Routledge 2002), 10–12.

[246] Reece Jones, "Geopolitical Boundary Narratives, the Global War on Terror and Border Fencing in India," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 34, no. 3 (2009), 290–304.

[247] Vallet, *Borders, Fences and Walls*, 14.

migrants, refugees, terrorists, and illegal cross-border traffickers and criminals.[248] While border hardening is not a new international phenomenon and there is no single reason behind it, there is a story that explains how it became a de facto norm for many international borders. State border policies are also a form of planning by political elites, and border hardening is no exception. As Roger Scruton argues, "Central planning by the state is likely to be insensitive to local perceptions, and biased in favor of the areas where politicians tend to live."[249] In other words, state policies often disadvantage those living at the periphery, far from the capital, and along the borders.

The term border hardening describes an institutional process, while the phrase hardened borders is descriptive of both the nature and type of the border. Hardening is also referred to as "thickening, toughening, and tightening," all representations of a border process that increased dramatically following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States.[250] Recent scholarly research on the hardening of U.S. borders with Mexico and Canada has contributed to insights about both state practices to harden and the effects of hardening on local and regional levels. In his well-regarded *Border Games: Policing the U.S.–Mexico Divide*, Peter Andreas describes the "growing use of new surveillance and information technologies," as manifesting "virtual borders," while "extending border controls outward" represents the "'thickening' of borders."[251] Andreas includes additional border enforcement tactics in his description of hardening, including the expansion of security buffer-zones, road checkpoints, policing efforts, and border crossing related arrests.[252]

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[248] Corey Johnson, Reece Jones, Anssi Paasi, Louise Amoore, Alison Mountz, Mark Salter, and Chris Rumford, "Interventions on Rethinking 'the Border' in Border Studies," *Political Geography* 30, no. 2 (2011), 61–69; Vallet, Borders, Fences and Walls, 14.

[249] Roger Scruton, *The Palgrave Macmillan Dictionary of Political Thought*, 3rd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 524.

[250] Francisco Lara-Valencia, "The 'Thickening' of the US–Mexico Border: Prospects for Cross-Border Networking and Cooperation," *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 26, no. 3 (2011), 251–264, DOI: 10.1080/08865655.2011.675715.

[251] Andreas, *Border Games*, vii.

[252] Ibid., 156.

Border hardening is usually a response to state security concerns. Described earlier as a deliberate policy of the state, the aims of border hardening include addressing international security concerns commonly accepted as threats against regional stability. Border hardening is also part of normalizing and "fixing" international borders. This norm maintains that political boundaries require delineation and demarcation when unclear. Border hardening is more than a physical process that materializes the border, but a deeply social, economic, and cultural process that affects people's attitudes about themselves and their perceptions of the state.[253] The physical materialization of a border as a barrier—specifically, through fences, walls, and checkpoints—is also expensive and resource demanding.[254]

The hardening of a border is frequently in tension with other state-related concerns. While hardened borders restrict illegal traffic and trade, this type of border is also an impediment to legal trade crossing the border. Additionally, hardened borders favor elites—political and economic—because they have greater access to means of securing legal passage or bribing their way across a border. Furthermore, hardened borders also favor state-owned or large businesses rather than locally owned businesses. Hardened borders also have a considerable effect on the local populations, influencing local perceptions of the border.[255]

2. Between Legitimacy and Hardening

German sociologist Alena Pfoser provides a case study of border making from the "bottom-up," demonstrating the value of this approach through the "understanding of [a

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[253] For a research on the relationship between local perceptions and state border control practices, see Steven Parham, "The Bridge that Divides: Local Perceptions of the Connected State in the Kyrgyzstan–Tajikistan–China Borderlands," *Central Asian Survey* 35, no. 3 (2015): 351–368, doi: 10.1080/02634937.2016.1200873.

[254] For a discussion on the cost of U.S.–Mexico border, see Blas Nunez-Neto, *Border Security: Barriers along the U.S. International Border* (New York: Nova Science, 2009), 31–32; for discussion of the thickening and hardening of European borders, see European Parliament, *Cost of Non-Schengen: The Impact of Border Controls Within Schengen on the Single Market: Study* (Brussels, Belgium: DG IPOL, 2016), doi:10.2861/899813.

[255] For discussion on border hardening and local perceptions, see Istvan Balcsok, Laszlo Dancs, Gabor Koncz, "Bridge or Iron Curtain? Local Hungarian and Ukrainian Perceptions of a New European Union Border," *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 20, no. 2 (2005): 47–66. doi:10.1080/08865655.2005.9695643.

border's] stability and malleability."[256] Using ethnographic research from border towns on the periphery of the European Union during a process the author calls "reordering Europe," Pfoser discusses social and economic interpretations of hardening borders in relation to historical memories of individuals, from "privileging local concerns for mobility or adopting the state's concerns over security and sovereignty."[257] Comparing two adjacent towns, one in Estonia and another in Russia, separated by a river, Pfoser describes the traumatic experience "when Estonia declared its independence in 1991 and successively installed border guards and material fortifications along the border," effectively ending decades of daily social and economic movement.[258] "The once integrated borderland" under the Soviet Union, declares Pfoser, was "turned into a site of divisions and nationalism."[259] Similar descriptions have been made of other post-Soviet places, especially in Central Asia.[260]

Although focused on borderlands in liberal and post-industrial spaces rather than the autocratic and predominantly agrarian Ferghana Valley, Pfoser's research about the border hardening process between communities—previously linked socially, politically, and economically—is insightful for this thesis. Pfoser's conclusions regarding the "experience and negotiations of physical borders as 'sites of mobility and enclosure'"[261] inform the "bottom-up approach to border-making projects,"[262] further validating the concept that borders mean different things to different people depending on their historical experiences and spatial perspective. Her research assumes that "State power is

256 Alena Pfoser, "Between Security and Mobility: Negotiating a Hardening Border Regime in the Russian-Estonian Borderland," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 41, no. 10 (2015), 1686, doi: 10.1080/1369183X.2015.1015408.

257 Ibid., 1684.

258 Ibid., 1685.

259 Ibid.

260 For examples, see Ali Banuazizi, *The New Geopolitics of Central Asia and its Borderlands* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1994); Graham E. Fuller, "Central Asia: The New Geopolitics," *RAND* (Santa Monica, CA: 1992).

261 Pfoser, "Between Security and Mobility," 1685.

262 Ibid., 1686.

always present at the edges of states,"[263] regardless of the role of the central state on the borders. Pfoser's research goes beyond asking why there is a border or how the border affects people dwelling in the borderland. In her words, "the main question for them is not if there is a border but how is the border—whether it runs counter to or corresponds with personal, local, or national needs of security, mobility, and economic well-being."[264]

Pfoser's research questions are important to the analysis in this thesis, providing the bottom-up framework of inquiry. In what she describes as her "grounded examination" of the re-bordering process, Pfoser asks:

1. How is this border lived and interpreted?
2. How can we conceptualize citizens' negotiations of borders and state authority in the borderland?
3. In the face of the increasing bureaucratization of the border, is the state merely experienced as a negative and disruptive force in the borderland…or do we have to assume a more complex relationship between citizens and the state?
4. What do local perceptions of the border tell us about the tensions at post-Soviet borders more generally?[265]

Pfoser's two narrative frames for analyzing the border—the everyday life of mobility and cross-border activities concerned with the sovereignty and security of the state—are useful to understand underlying tensions between state border practices and the experiences of the people in the borderland. Furthermore, Pfoser's emphasis on border interpretations and conceptions is not far from evaluating a border based on local perceptions and forms of obedience. Pfoser also shows that border perceptions can vary dramatically among the multiple scales of territory, from the individual to the local community on up through the state and international levels.

3. Hardening and Stability

Boaz Atzila cites the works of Charles Tilly and Donald Horowitz, along with reviewing the historical development of these concepts, to support his view on the

[263] Pfoser, "Between Security and Mobility," 1686.

[264] Pfoser, "Between Security and Mobility," 1686.

[265] Ibid., 1685.

international norm of territorial integrity and fixed borders. Atzila, however, argues against the conventional wisdom. He contends that fixing borders through delineation and demarcation might undermine international stability, thereby increasing conflict among weak states. "Socio-politically," reasons Atzila, "weak states in a world of fixed borders may be more prone to internal conflict or even civil war because the incentives for excluding whole groups of citizens are greater, and because there is a higher likelihood of the emergence of an internal security dilemma."[266] Atzila discusses conflicts that might be exacerbated by bordering through fixing the line: civil-war spillover from another state; refugees that "create breeding grounds for insurgency" movements; and imbalances created between minority ethnic groups, their ethnic homeland, and the hosting state.[267]

Atzila fully accepts Tilly's argument that war making leads to state making, which leads to more effective tax extraction and results in efficient modern states.[268] After testing four hypotheses against multiple case studies, Atzila contends that fixed borders weaken already enfeebled states, leading to an increased propensity for international conflict. The thesis proposed by Atzila, however, is primarily concerned with the international phenomena of territorial integrity and the prospect of international conflict. He is relatively silent on border hardening as a phenomenon and its effects on regional stability through local perceptions.

Scholars consider the concept of border fixing at multiple scales of geography. Alejandro Grimson describes the process of fixing borders in both regional and local contexts. Although his analysis is primarily regional, focusing on the integration between states and the effect that fixing borders has on the creation of states, Grimson's concept of "borderization" provides insight into the multiplicity of borders in the Ferghana Valley. Borderization "refers to the historical process in which the many elements

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[266] Boaz Atzili, "When Good Fences Make Bad Neighbors: Fixed Borders, State Weakness, and International Conflict," *International Security* 31, no. 3 (Winter 2006/07): 140; and the author's book on the same subject, Boaz Atzili, *Good Fences, Bad Neighbors: Border Fixity and International Conflict* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

[267] Atzili, "When Good Fences Make Bad Neighbors," 140.

[268] Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990–1992* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1992), see chapters 3 and 4 for his theory on war making and state making.

making up a border are shaped by the interaction of central powers with border populations."[269] Borders are never truly fixed, remaining "unfinished and unstable," collectively the "historical outcome of human action."[270] The local element of borderization represents three of his "four constitutive elements": the population living in the borderlands, the historical analysis of "different sociocultural regimes in the border area," and the multiple ways that the border is perceived.[271]

Grimson's framing of state borders being fixed also provides the conceptual framework to understand how border hardening might materialize through the political, cultural, and socio-economic interactions in the borderlands. In Grimson's view, even "such things as trade wars, media disputes and diverse conflicts concerning identity" represent tensions and possible conflicts that "are ultimately about the border."[272] These observations imply that dramatic changes in the characteristics of a border, especially when agrarian lives and communities depend on the products of territories defined by this border, might cause instability and increased conflict.

Normative questions aside, policy debates relating to open or closed borders remain unsettled: Do fixed borders make local conflict less frequent? Does the process of border hardening increase local tensions and conflict? From contrasting the relatively closed external borders of the European Union with its open Schengen zone internal borders[273] to contrasting local and regional border preferences against international norms and expectations, research on the dynamics of border hardening has grown in the past two decades—a direct result of increasingly hardened borders.[274]

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269 Grimson, "Nations, Nationalism and 'Borderization' in the Southern Cone," in *A Companion to Border Studies*, 194–195.

270 Grimson, "Nations, Nationalism and 'Borderization' in the Southern Cone," 194.

271 Ibid., 194–195.

272 Ibid., 195.

273 James Anderson, Liam O'Dowd, and Thomas M. Wilson, *New Borders for a Changing Europe: Cross-border Cooperation and Governance* (Portland, OR.: F. Cass, 2003).

274 See Tamar Arieli, "Borders, Conflict and Security," *International Journal of Conflict Management* 27, no. 4 (2016), doi: 10.1108/IJCMA-08-2015-0050.

4. Global Context of Border Hardening

Since the terrorist attacks against the United States on 11 September 2001, border hardening has become a prevalent norm between states on every continent. When deliberately undertaken as a policy, border hardening demands a significant investment of labor, money, materials, and other state resources. As the trend of more hardened borders continues in the twenty-first century, scholars and policy advocates seem less confident that international borders could soften.[275] Just as the "rise and demise of the territorial state" proposed by John Herz at the dawn of the nuclear age went unrealized, globalization is unlikely to dissolve borders.[276] A wide field of scholarly literature addresses the performance and effectiveness of borders, whether hardened or soft, but overlooks the impact of hardening on the long-term institutionalization of borders and its relationship with regional stability. This thesis analyzes a specific case of border hardening in relation to regional stability, border legitimacy, and institutional obedience using Max Weber's framework for institutional authority.

Depending on the degree to which they are hardened or soft, borders restrict the flow of goods and people between states. Specifically, border hardening describes the delineation and demarcation of a territorial border through fences or walls, as well as the process of the securitization and militarization of a border through unilateral enforcement, vigorous patrolling and surveillance, and the criminalization of prohibited crossings. Hardened borders are visible and experienced as a part of everyday life between the United States and Mexico and between the European Union (EU) and the non-EU post-Soviet states, as well as between many borders in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. Political and military leaders often presume that hardening is an easy prescription for non-traditional security threats, including international terrorism, transnational criminal networks, cross-border smuggling, and illegal migrant or refugee

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[275] For examples of optimism about prospects for a borderless or "flattened" world, see Kenichi Ohmae, *The Borderless World* (New York: Harper Collins 1990); Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Penguin, 1992); and, Thomas L. Friedman, *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century* (New York: Macmillan, 2006).

[276] John H. Herz, *The Nation-State and the Crisis of World Politics* (New York: McKay, 1976), 99–123; for an earlier analysis, see also, John H. Herz, "Rise and Demise of The Territorial State," *World Politics* 9, no. 4 (1957): 473–93, doi:10.2307/2009421.

flows. These potential security threats are interwoven, complex problems that relate to borders and contribute to local as well as regional instability. It may seem logical, then, to assume that the policy response of border hardening improves regional stability.

Instead, border hardening is commonly associated with enhanced stability in regions prone to conflict.[277] Borders in Central Asia's Ferghana Valley—with their relatively short history of formation over the last century—are especially suited for critically analyzing the assumption that border hardening improves local security and regional stability. Along its border with Kyrgyzstan in the Ferghana Valley, Uzbekistan unilaterally adopted hardening as a practical means of border enforcement. Uzbekistan responded to the 1998 terrorist attacks in the capital city of Tashkent with border hardening, among other measures, and diverged from its previous policy of "friendly borders" among the post-Soviet Central Asian republics following independence in 1991. Uzbekistan's border hardening efforts intensified in the early 2000s, aided by security cooperation assistance programs—in the form of money, training, and materials—from the European Union, the Russian Federation, and the United States.[278]

Border hardening increased the pressures of everyday life for people living in the Ferghana Valley borderlands. As the borders hardened, crossing became a greater challenge, especially when compared to the Soviet era or the period immediately following independence. For people living in the Ferghana Valley borderlands—particularly along the Uzbekistan−Kyrgyzstan border—previous patterns of social, cultural, and economic interaction rubbed against the increasingly hardened border.

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[277] There are multiple books and journal articles on the effects of border hardening, including: Reeves, *Border Work*; Madeleine Reeves, Johan Rasanayagam, and Judith Beyer, *Ethnographies of the State in Central Asia: Performing Politics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014); Jeff Sahadeo and Russell Zanca, *Everyday Life in Central Asia: Past and Present* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007); Roman Muzalevsky, "Border Disputes in the Ferghana Valley Threaten to Undermine Regional Trade and Stability," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Jamestown Foundation, vol. 11, no. 141, 1 Aug 2014, http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=42706&cHash=53b6bf8f36b41d6221ada47e0516dfeb#.V-hdR5MrL5Y.

[278] For examples of U.S. funding for regional border programs in the Ferghana Valley, see Jim Nichol, "Central Asia: Regional Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests," *Current Politics and Economics of South, Southeastern, and Central Asia* 43-151 (DC: Congressional Research Service, 2014); and, Myles G. Smith, "Border Hardening Throughout Central Asia in Anticipation of NATO Pullout," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 9, no. 96, Jamestown Foundation, Washington, DC, 21 May 2012, http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=39398&no_cache=1#.V9H48E0whph.

This tension with the border that makes everyday life more difficult may also undermine the overall social and political stability of the region, despite addressing immediate state security concerns. Furthermore, border hardening may change social perceptions of the border, diminishing the border's overall institutional legitimacy. The issue then becomes whether border hardening thwarts regional stability through a process of decreased border legitimacy and social obedience, despite the presumed success of hardening against security threats that otherwise would degrade regional stability. Questions related to the Ferghana Valley are admittedly complex and multifaceted, given all the border and social dynamics contributing to regional stability. Policy-makers and military leaders must move beyond assumptions and simple answers to complex challenges in order to balance short and long-term factors of security and stability.

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IV. FERGHANA VALLEY BORDERS, 1991–2009: HISTORICAL CONTEXT FOR BORDER HARDENING

A. INTRODUCTION

There is a history in all men's lives.

—Earl of Warwick, Shakespeare's *Henry IV*[279]

Recent history of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border and regional security concerns of the Ferghana Valley furnish the context for Uzbekistan's unilateral border hardening. Every border has a unique history framed by a particular time, culture, and place. Geographer Nick Megoran applies the term "boundary biography" to unpack a border's history and to "explore how specific boundaries materialize, rematerialize, and dematerialize in different ways, in different contexts, at different scales, and at different times."[280] Just as "good biographies of people illuminate moments of their lives and show how these multiple aspects interrelate or contradict each other,"[281] a useful boundary biography will illustrate the continuities and discontinuities of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border. Borrowing metaphors from the natural sciences, historian John Lewis Gaddis describes the discontinuities as "phase transitions" that mark "those points of criticality at which stability becomes unstable."[282] Border hardening in the late 1990s is one such discontinuity in the Ferghana Valley because it marked a shift, from previously porous and open borders of "friendship" to securitized and hardened borders of antagonism between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan.[283]

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279 William Shakespeare, *Henry IV*, Part II, Act III, Scene 1, line 1785, from *Open Source Shakespeare*, The George Mason University, http://www.opensourceshakespeare.org/views/plays/play_view.php?WorkID=henry4p2&Act=3&Scene=1&Scope=scene.

280 Nick Megoran, "Rethinking the Study of International Boundaries: A Biography of the Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan Boundary," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 102, no. 2 (2012): 477, doi:10.1080/00045608.2011.595969.

281 Ibid., 478.

282 Gaddis, *Landscape of History*, 98.

283 For an explanation of Uzbekistan's unilateral border hardening from 1999 to 2000, see Megoran, "The Critical Geopolitics of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan Ferghana Valley Boundary Dispute, 1999–2000," 746–758.

This thesis concedes to the conventional wisdom that border hardening decreases immediate security threats and improves regional stability.[284] Specifically, border hardening between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan should have increased stability in the Ferghana Valley in the late 1990s and early 2000s, especially when considering the immense local and national resources committed to hardening the border as well as the billions of dollars from foreign states funding this hardening. The reasoning for dedicating these resources stems from the idea that border hardening reduces cross-border illegal activity, fixes an ambiguous and porous border, and increases state security against non-traditional threats common to the region such as terrorism and smuggling.

Before assessing the effects of border hardening on security and stability, this chapter explains the history of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border in light of a popularized "danger narrative" that shapes international engagement as well as propels the persistent security concerns threatening stability in the Ferghana Valley. Chapter II reviewed the general explanations of security dynamics in the Ferghana Valley and the most compelling explanations for sources of regional instability, as well as relevant concepts of border theory and recent literature on border hardening. Building on Chapter II, Chapter III first analyzes Western perspectives of the Ferghana Valley in terms of "danger narratives." These danger narratives may hinder more nuanced understandings of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border and the prospects for stability in the Ferghana Valley by entangling policy and funding decisions with misconceptions. The second section of this chapter expounds on the Ferghana Valley's history under the Soviet Union and the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border's internationalization following independence in 1991. The third section traces the subsequent hardening of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

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[284] For discussion on border hardening improving security and promoting peace, see Pauletta Otis and Joseph C. Bebel, "Borders and Boundaries: Drawing Lines Which Keep the Peace," *International Peacekeeping* 6, no. 3 (1999): 31–53. doi:10.1080/13533319908413784. See also, John Agnew, "Balkan Borders: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly," Queen's University Belfast and UCLA, 2012, https://www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres/CentreforInternationalBordersResearch/Publications/WorkingPapers/CIBRWorkingPapers/Filetoupload,309461,en.pdf; and Detlef Müller-Mahn, *The Spatial Dimension of Risk: How Geography Shapes the Emergence of Riskscapes*, ed. (New York: Routledge, 2012), 154–171

B. "DANGER NARRATIVES" OF THE FERGHANA VALLEY: FUELING MISPERCEPTIONS, DRIVING POLICY AND FUNDING

"Danger narratives" fuel Western misperceptions of the Ferghana Valley, drive misguided policy and funding, and ultimately legitimize coercive border enforcement along the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border. Madeleine Reeves depicts academic and policy discussions on the Ferghana Valley as distorted and "dominated by accounts of Central Asia as the battle-ground of elemental forces and a focal point for 'civilizational clash.'"[285] Reeves emphasizes that the Ferghana Valley is at the heart of this discourse of danger, frequently "identified as the mythical epicenter of such contention."[286] Many political and military leaders then associate the Ferghana Valley with these danger narratives. John Heathershaw and Nick Megoran suggest that "the way people—embedded in organizational structures and as individuals—think about certain places affects the way they act towards them."[287] Subsequently, misperceptions influence Western foreign aid and international conflict prevention programs, security assistance policy and funding, media coverage, and scholarly research toward the Ferghana Valley.

Danger narratives of Central Asia and the Ferghana Valley are rooted in historical characterizations that, in particular, are nothing new. Beyond a clichéd portrayal of regional volatility, foreigners often levy two additional characterizations upon Central Asia: Great Game geopolitics and the Heartland Theory. Originating in the nineteenth century, the Great Game first referred to the struggle between Russia and Great Britain for control of Central Asia; subsequent references have inferred power struggles between the United States, Russia, and China for regional dominance in Central Asia.[288] According to Robert D. Kaplan, the first contemporary use of "heartland" in the theoretical sense was by British geographer James Fairgrieve in his 1915 book

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285 Madeleine Reeves, "Locating Danger: Konfliktologiia and the Search for Fixity in the Ferghana Valley Borderlands," *Central Asian Survey* 24, no. 1 (2005): 68, doi: 10.1080/02634930500050057.

286 Ibid.

287 Heathershaw and Megoran, "Contesting Danger," 589–590.

288 Alexander Cooley, *Great Games, Local Rules: The New Great Power Contest in Central Asia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), xiii.

Geography and World Power.[289] The idea of Central Asia as part of the global "heartland," however, goes as far back as Halford J. Mackinder's 1904 pamphlet "The Geographical Pivot of History," which Mackinder subsequently expanded into the 1919 book *Democratic Ideals and Reality: A Study in the Politics of Reconstruction*.[290] Mackinder's theory emphasized Central Asia's geographic placement among the trifecta of the competing and intermingling continents of Asia, Europe, and Africa; this narrative is inherently about conflict and furthers the perception that Central Asia is dangerous.

While the Great Game and Heartland arguments continued as part of Cold War geopolitics, the emergence of the oil-rich Gulf and the later destabilization of the Afghanistan–Pakistan region further centralized the heartland view of Central Asia in Western narratives during the post-Soviet and post-9/11 eras.[291] German geographer Hermann Kreutzmann also discusses the heartland theory in his essay, "Boundary-making as a Strategy for Risk Reduction in Conflict-prone Spaces," theorizing that "spaces offering a certain degree of freedom are shrinking" and that, within the borderlands of the heartland, "riskscapes and the vulnerability of the inhabitants are growing."[292] Kreutzmann's assessment furthers the perception of the Ferghana Valley borders as a significant risk factor, another source of danger. With borders now among the potential sources of instability in the Ferghana Valley following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Heartland thesis and Great Game motif continue with renewed emphasis, escalating the impression of conflict between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan and the potential for a wider war.

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289 Robert D. Kaplan, *The Revenge of Geography: What the Map Tells Us About Coming Conflicts and the Battle against Fate* (New York: Random House, 2002), 76.

290 Kaplan, *The Revenge of Geography*, 76.

291 Cummings, *Understanding Central Asia*, 28–30.

292 Kreutzmann's discusses the pretexts of both the Great Game and the theory of the Heartland in his essay, Hermann Kreutzmann, "Boundary-making as a Strategy for Risk Reduction in Conflict-prone Spaces," in *The Spatial Dimension of Risk: How Geography Shapes the Emergence of Riskscapes*, ed. Detlef Müller-Mahn (New York: Routledge, 2012), 154–171; the quotes referenced here are from 170.

Despite widespread—albeit, cautious—optimism for peaceful relations between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan during the initial years of independence,[293] the Central Asian danger narrative reasserted itself in the late-1990s, and it has continued more than twenty-five years after independence.[294] The newly internationalized and ambiguous borders of post-Soviet Central Asia increasingly became a dominant concern driving the danger narrative.[295] A 2003 RAND report commissioned by the United States Army described the Soviet manipulation of borders as a lasting legacy: "The Ferghana Valley's heritage as the political and cultural center of Islam in Central Asia was what led Stalin to divide it among the three states [Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan] with its present convoluted borders, ensuring control from Moscow by a divide-and-conquer mechanism." This same report also suggested that, across Central Asia, "border conflicts are most likely in the Ferghana Valley."[296] British author and journalist Edward Stourton made a similar assertion in 2010, arguing, "The way Stalin designed the region ensured that it would regularly be shaken by inter-ethnic violence."[297] Stalin, according to these interpretations of the region's demarcation history, set forth a policy to limit the economic and social influence of the Ferghana Valley by dividing its political influence. While more nuanced than the pejorative explanations of "Stalin's Giant Pencil"[298] or

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[293] See Boris Z.Rumer, *Central Asia: A Gathering Storm?* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2002); and Hafeez Malik, *Central Asia: Its Strategic Importance and Future Prospects* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994).

[294] See Paul Goble, "Central Asia's 'Karabakhs' May Be Even More Dangerous Than the Original," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 13 (81), 26 April 2016, https://jamestown.org/program/central-asias-karabakhs-may-be-even-more-dangerous-than-the-original/.

[295] For examples of this return to the danger narrative, see Gary K. Bertsch, Cassady B. Craft, Scott A. Jones, and Michael D. Beck, *Crossroads and Conflict: Security and Foreign Policy in the Caucasus and Central Asia* (New York: Routledge, 2000); and for specific focus on the borders as a source of conflict, see International Crisis Group, "Central Asia: Border Disputes and Conflict Potential," *ICG Asia Report* no. 33, 4 April 2002, http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/031F4E484F8E6EEFC1256B950040E33F-icg-casia-04apr.pdf.

[296] Olga Oliker, Thomas S. Szayna, Scott Pace, and Peter A. Wilson, *Faultlines of Conflict in Central Asia and the South Caucasus: Implications for the U.S. Army* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2003), xx, https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monograph_reports/2005/RAND_MR1598.pdf.

[297] Edward Stourton, "Kyrgyzstan: Stalin's Deadly Legacy," *The Guardian*, 20 June 2010, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/jun/20/kyrgyzstan-stalins-deadly-legacy.

[298] Alexander Morrison, "Stalin's Giant Pencil: Debunking a Myth About Central Asia's Borders," *EurasiaNet*, 13 February 2017, http://www.eurasianet.org/node/82376.

lines drawn by a "drunkard,"[299] these explanations continue the danger narrative, perpetuate the belief that future conflict in the Ferghana Valley is nearly inevitable because of "Stalin's time bombs,"[300] and misguide conflict resolution and border management programs.

Alarm based on the danger narrative attracts foreign money and resources that offer mediation programs and conflict resolution services. Following the 11 September 2001 terror attacks on the United States, increased concern with security and terrorism spurred much of the funding for academic research related to the Ferghana Valley.[301] Meanwhile, border disputes and violent local conflicts, ostensibly about ethnic divisions created by supposedly haphazard borders, dominated Western news reporting on the Valley.[302] When violence or local conflict occurs in the Ferghana Valley, faulty assumptions about the borders preclude more meaningful conversations that consider the role of contingency and individual agency.

Furthermore, the international political environment falsely equates ill-defined or undemarcated borders with conflict. With growing international terrorism and transnational criminal organizations in the 1990s and 2000s, the securitization and

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299 Shaun Walker, ''Democracy was hijacked. It got a bad name': the Death of the Post-Soviet Dream," *The Guardian*, 8 December 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/dec/08/central-asia-tajikistan-kazakhstan-kyrgyzstan-uzbekistan-turkmenistan.

300 Robert Coalson, "How Stalin Created Some of the Post-Soviet World's Worst Ethnic Conflicts," *The Atlantic*, 1 March 2013, https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/03/how-stalin-created-some-of-the-post-soviet-worlds-worst-ethnic-conflicts/273649/.

301 See Madeleine Reeves, "Antropologiia Srednei Azii cherez desiat' let posle 'sostoianie polia': stakan napolovinu polon ili napolovinu pust?" ["The Anthropology of Central Asia a Decade After 'The State of the Field': A Cup Half Full or Half Empty?"], *Antropologicheskij Forum* 20, no. 1 (2014): 60–79; English version available here: http://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/36121839/Reeves_Anthropology_of_Central_Asia_Ten_Years_On_ENG.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ56TQJRTWSMTNPEA&Expires=1483302991&Signature=Mo4YKh7ORygHC2FQNN8IqoEGjsk%3D&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3DThe_Anthropology_of_Central_Asia_Ten_Yea.pdf.

302 See "Russia Returns to Central Asia as Fears of Jihad Rise," *The Daily Telegraph* (London), 14 April 2001, www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic; "A Powder Keg that is About to Explode," *The Times* (London), 7 April 2004, www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic; Michael Mainville, "Uzbek Violence Rattles Region," *The Toronto Star*, 23 May 2005, www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic; "Another Crisis Fomenting in Ferghana Valley: Security Structures from Three Countries Fight Islamists," *Defense and Security* (Russia), 7 April 2006 Friday, www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic; Reid Standish, "Where the War on Terror Lives Forever," *Foreign Policy*, 2 September 2016, http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/09/02/war-on-terror-forever-islam-karimov-uzbekistan-legacy-imu-isis-central-asia/.

criminalization of the US–Mexico border also informs broader perceptions that open or porous borders are a threat to stability. The perceptions that harder borders are more secure not only guides academic research in security studies but also influences some U.S. foreign policy decision-makers and designers of international security assistance programs to support more coercive border management regimes.[303] The problem with relying on danger narratives, argue Heathershaw and Megoran, "is not simply that it leads to academic and journalistic misinterpretations of events in the region but that it informs and, therefore, deforms western policy and practice."[304] The popular danger narratives of the Ferghana Valley fuel assumptions that border demarcation and border security professionalization are proper responses to avoid future conflict. As Madeleine Reeves notes, "accounts of peace and conflict potential in the region nonetheless regularly cite the ambiguity of territorial borders and the presence of minority populations in neighbouring states as 'root causes' of conflict in the region, typically joining water shortages, unemployment, corruption and Islamic militancy as other key conflict-inducing factors."[305] The U.S. Army's Foreign Military Studies Office produced a report as recently as 2016 entitled *Undemarcated Borders of Violent Conflict in Central Asia* that weighs the dangers of border disputes and the prospects for future security in the region.[306] Reeves suggests that "undemarcated borders being discursively transformed into 'unresolved border disputes'" is one indication of this danger discourse on the Ferghana Valley.[307]

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303 For descriptions of border perceptions and changes following 9/11, see Vallet, *Borders, Fences and Walls*, especially Chapter 11, Said Saddiki, "Border Fences as an Anti-Immigration Device: A Comparative View of American and Spanish Policies," and Chapter 12, Rodrigo Nieto-Gomez, "Walls, Sensors and Drones: Technology and Surveillance on the US–Mexico Border."

304 John Heathershaw and Nick Megoran, "Contesting Danger: A New Agenda for Policy and Scholarship on Central Asia," *International Affairs* 87, no. 3 (2011), 607, doi:10.1111/j.1468 2346.2011.00992.x.

305 Reeves, "Locating Danger," 68.

306 See Matthew Stein, *Undemarcated Borders of Violent Conflict in Central Asia*, Fort Leavenworth, KS, FMSO, U.S. Army, 2016, http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/documents/Border/Undemarcated% 20Borders%20and%20Incidents%20of%20Violent%20Conflict%20in%20Central%20Asia.pdf; also, see Matthew Stein, Compendium of Central Asian Military and Security Activity, Fort Leavenworth, KS, FMSO, U.S. Army, 29 August 2016, http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/documents/Stein%20-%20Compendium%20v5.pdf.

307 Reeves, "Locating Danger," 68.

The point here is that undemarcated or undelineated borders are not necessarily sources of conflict in and of themselves. As Starr notes, border conflicts and violence between ethnic communities "have given rise to the notion that the Ferghana Valley is fundamentally unstable."[308] Starr surmises that too much of the scholarly literature and news reports "regard the various explosions of instability as intimately linked with one another causally and arising from supposedly age-old ethnic hostilities across the Ferghana territory."[309] Additionally, the projection of Western concepts—including territorial alignment, sovereignty, and national congruence—is partly responsible for widespread assumptions that such ambiguity or openness about borders and identity leads to conflict. Also, political and military leaders fail to consider the actual roots of conflict when they assume that the Ferghana Valley borders derived from a dangerous drunkard's pencil. A deeper understanding of the Ferghana Valley without mistaken assumptions—including its historical context—is needed among policy-makers, especially concerning the formation of its borders and the effect that hardening borders has on the social, economic, and cultural dynamics of the region.

The danger narrative of the Ferghana Valley—perpetuated by distorted media reporting, agenda-driven scholarly research, and misplaced international aid—impedes an accurate understanding of the complexity of the region. Writing from a historian's perspective, Starr criticizes this distorted view of the Ferghana Valley. "The image is one of a zone of crisis," notes Starr, "with a generalized state of turmoil lying just beneath the surface which can at any time burst into the light of day."[310] Whether interpreting incidents of conflict in light of border disputes, nationalism, terrorism, ethnicity, or "specific governmental policies," the all too common shortcoming in Ferghana Valley scholarship is failing "to consider these various incidents in any kind of broader context."[311] In fact, experts employing a multidisciplinary approach—including with

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[308] Starr, introduction to *Ferghana Valley*, xiii.

[309] Ibid.

[310] Ibid.

[311] Ibid.

geography, economics, history, sociology, and political science methods—have accomplished recent scholarship on the Ferghana Valley based on a "broader context."

Several political geographers and ethnographers have dedicated their professional careers to explaining the Ferghana Valley more accurately to outsiders. Nick Megoran and John Heathershaw unpack "the received wisdom of Western policy, journalistic and entertainment communities as well as much of the academic world of area studies that Central Asia is a source and site of particular dangers," and explain that danger narratives risk becoming, at worst, self-fulfilling prophesies, while at a minimum, directing millions of dollars of international aid toward faulty programs.[312] The insights of Megoran and Heathershaw, along with those of many other researchers who have spent time in the borderlands before border hardening and since, provide needed nuances to the border stories in the Ferghana Valley. Clearly, gaining an accurate understanding of the Ferghana Valley "is no simple matter, for to do so demands an understanding of very diverse aspects of human activity, including economics, social relations, politics, culture, religion, and a myriad of sub-elements within each of these spheres."[313] As noted by Starr in Chapter II, the Ferghana Valley is not simple.[314] Beyond understanding security and stability in the Ferghana Valley, border demarcation and hardening efforts are also part of a larger international debate on the merits of sovereign borders (discussed earlier in Chapters II and III). Since monetary assistance and security training from foreign governments and international organizations continue to support border security projects

312 Nick Megoran and John Heathershaw, "Danger and Security in Central Asia," *Central Asia and the Caucasus* 12, no. 3 (2011), accessed from https://www.staff.ncl.ac.uk/nick.megoran/pdf/CA&C_megoran_heathershaw_english.pdf.

313 Starr, introduction to *Ferghana Valley*, xiii-xiv.

314 Ibid., ix.

for Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan,[315] the effects of border hardening efforts need to be more accurately understood.

C. BORDER-MAKING AND INTERNATIONALIZATION: HISTORICAL CONTEXT FOR THE FERGHANA VALLEY

This section provides the historical context for the making of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border during the Soviet era and explains the unique internationalization of these borders following independence. No other area in Central Asia more vividly represents the complexity of post-Soviet spaces than the Ferghana Valley's intersection of international borders among Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Maps of the Ferghana Valley indicating different demarcations remain as much political or ideological statements as the results of cartography. As the result of the region's history—pre-Russian, Tsarist, and during the Soviet era—Nick Megoran describes how the materialization of borders between communities changed identities even in the short-term. While conducting ethnographic fieldwork in the region's border areas, his efforts to bring "some order and demarcate Uzbek and Kyrgyz, Uzbekistani and Kyrgyzstani" amused his hosts.[316] The local reply suggested that "here, no one talks about Uzbekistan or Kyrgyzstan."[317] These nationalized descriptions were foreign concepts to the people of the Ferghana Valley borderlands. Despite whether such designations mattered to locals, historic ambivalence about nationalized labels is antithetical to modern state bureaucracies and border management practices. Contextualization of the Uzbekistan–

315 For examples of U.S. funding for regional border security, see Jim Nichol, "Central Asia: Regional Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests," *Current Politics and Economics of South, Southeastern, and Central Asia* 23, no. 1 (2014): 55–56, 77, 112–118, 122–123, http://search.proquest.com/docview/1623534484?accountid=12702; Donna Miles, "Guard Program Builds Partner Capacity, Relationships in CENTCOM," *American Forces Press Service*, http://archive.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=121042; and, Myles G. Smith, "Border Hardening Throughout Central Asia in Anticipation of NATO Pullout," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 9, no. 96, Jamestown Foundation, Washington, DC, 21 May 2012, http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=39398&no_cache=1#.V9H48E0whph. For examples of foreign assistance for border hardening and security training, see, Cooley, *Great Games, Local Rules*, 30–50; Jos Boonstra, "Reviewing the EU's approach to Central Asia," *EUCAM Policy Brief* 34 (2015), http://www.eucentralasia.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/Policy_Briefs/EUCAM-PB-34-Reviewing-EU-policies-in-Central-Asia-EN.pdf; Eugene Rumer, Richard Sokolsky, and Paul Stronski, "US Policy Toward Central Asia 3.0," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* 25 (Jan 2016), http://carnegieendowment.org/files/CP_259_Central_Asia_Final.pdf.

316 Megoran, "For Ethnography in Political Geography," 631.

317 Ibid.

Kyrgyzstan border begins with its history of formation, internationalization, and eventual hardening.

Two political processes transformed the Ferghana Valley over the last century—domination under Moscow during the greater part of the twentieth century and overnight political independence that followed the breakup of the Soviet Union. While the Ferghana Valley has a long history, "conquered and settled by numerous different groups, from Greeks and Arabs to Mongols and Turks,"[318] the period under Soviet rule and independence from the Soviet Union provide the dominant context for contemporary political social, economic, and cultural dynamics in the Ferghana Valley. Additionally, the border between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan was created, "materialized, dematerialized, and rematerialized" through these processes and Uzbekistan's subsequent border hardening.[319] The global shift toward securitizing borders and criminalizing certain border-related activities—although accelerated in the wake of 9/11 and the United States-led invasion of Afghanistan—was underway between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan by 1998. The temporal focus of this thesis is on border hardening in the late 1990s through the early 2000s, concluding before the 2010 violence in Osh, Kyrgyzstan. The Ferghana Valley, however, is contextualized through its broader history, including the formation of socialist states under the Soviet Union, followed by the challenges of statehood since independence.

1. Border Making Under the Soviet Union.

The danger narrative centered on borders is too simplistic, ignoring the strategic calculations of Stalin's cartographers at the time of the Soviet territorial delimitation, as well as the influential involvement of locals in the border-making projects during the 1920s. A more nuanced and accurate understanding of Central Asian border-making is needed to avoid the danger narrative, particularly as it relates to the idea of dangerous borders, and to assess stability in the Ferghana Valley. A common narrative regarding the

318 Nick Megoran, "'B/Orderning' and Biopolitics in Central Asia," in *A Companion to Border Studies*, 476.

319 Megoran, "Rethinking the Study of International Boundaries," 470.

conception of Central Asia's contemporary borders usually begins, "The drawing of borders between republics from 1924 by Stalin was highly arbitrary…the communists engineered new and arguably artificial regional units.."[320] Rather than the result of conflict, the administrative borders delineating Soviet republics in the Ferghana Valley derived in part from Moscow's decisions from the 1920s through the 1960s.[321]

Research since the end of the Cold War has produced a more nuanced understanding of early Soviet border making, especially for the Central Asian borders. Sally Cummings distinguishes different scholarly theories for Soviet border delimitation in the Ferghana Valley—including to divide ethnic populations, to advance "economic imperatives" of the state, to provide some form of equality among republics, to serve as temporary constructions pending a future international system, or more simply to reflect ethnonational lines—noting that the full answer is probably a combination of these reasons.[322] According to some Soviet archival evidence, Cummings argues, "the picture we have of border drawing is less one of an arbitrary process than one that also involved Soviet ethnographers, local cultural and political elites and wider populations."[323] The dependence of the Soviet delimitation process between 1924 and 1936 along ethno-linguistic divisions led to the "four Soviet Socialist Republics of Uzbeks, Tajiks, Turkmen, and Kirghizia."[324] Since delimitation, these borders of former Soviet republics have changed little, even after their 1991 independence, reflecting congruence in national-territorial alignment for nearly a century.

The politicization of the Ferghana Valley territory occurred during the early years of the Soviet Union. Above all, efforts of Soviet ethnographers, Moscow and local bureaucrats, and cartographers were based on a pure scientism that intended to rationally

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320 Anthony Hyman, *Power and Politics in Central Asia's New Republics*, vol. 273 (London, UK: Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, 1994), 9.

321 Cummings, *Understanding Central Asia*, 4.

322 Ibid., 41.

323 Ibid., 173.

324 Ibid., 13; the Soviet Union considered the Kazakh SSR separate from the other four socialist republics.

construct nations in order to carryout an eventual communist internationalism.[325] "The national-territorial delimitation (NTD) that took place between 1924 and 1936," explains Reaves, was "a singularly important moment in Central Asia's recent history that also marked the triumph of a particular normative conception of territorialized nationhood, which still lives on in Central Asia today."[326]

The historical context illuminates, however, how quickly the political and practical significance of these borders changed. In less than a century, the Ferghana Valley borders went from demonstrating relative political unity across the Valley to more or less delineating three independent republics. The Soviet Union was instrumental in creating the ethnically aligned states and delineating borders, while, at the same time, creating a common space among the Soviet socialist republics. Political and economic independence in 1991 was accompanied by "consolidating new statehood and civic identities, while allowing for the growth of national cultures that were formally developed but also oppressed."[327] Additionally, multiple ethnic enclaves—holdovers from administrative deals under Moscow—continue to exist outside their ethnically centered countries in the territories of other states.[328] While political borders are the primary concern in this analysis of history in the Ferghana Valley, it is difficult to separate the political dimension fully from the social, economic, and cultural dimensions of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border. As Cummings acknowledges, "political borders, like their geographic and cultural counterparts, have changed in their reach and in the degree to which they have created clearly identifiable and fixed loci of power."[329] The borders and borderlands of the Ferghana Valley demonstrate this changing nature and

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[325] For a detailed description of the building of separate nation-states during the early years of the Soviet Union, see Francine Hirsch, *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014); Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923–1939* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001); Stephen E. Hanson, *Time and Revolution: Marxism and the Design of Soviet Institutions* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); and Ronald Suny, *The Revenge of the Past: Nationalism, Revolution, and the Collapse of the Soviet Union* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993).

[326] Reeves, *Border Work*, 68.

[327] Cummings, *Understanding Central Asia*, 5.

[328] Lewis, *Geographic Perspectives on Soviet Central Asia*, 280–81.

[329] Cummings, *Understanding Central Asia*, 18.

meaning of political boundaries through time, as well as the changing assertiveness of Uzbekistan's central government on the borderlands.

Relevant archival sources remain closed to researchers, either by local autocratic regimes or by Moscow, preventing a full historical account of the Central Asian border making. As described in the danger narratives, most observers contend that Central Asia's contemporary border issues are rooted in the region's subjugation under Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union.[330] Attributing contemporary border issues in the Ferghana Valley to Moscow's legacy in Central Asia is not entirely unfounded. Central Asian borders stem chiefly from the political, economic, and social decisions made by Tsarist Imperial and Soviet Communist leaders during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Where no state borders had previously existed, Moscow established the Central Asian borders in less than a century. Also, as Cummings noted, "local practices and beliefs" greatly influenced the early border making process, which further complicated the local perceptions and the practical effects of the Ferghana Valley borders.[331] One reason for continued disagreements over border delineation among the republics in Central Asia is a lack of consistency with the original maps. Acclaimed French geographer Yves Lacoste argued that "clear and evocative...historical maps which make it possible to understand the development of the situation (through successive borderlines)" are necessary for insight into a nation's claim over contested territory, particularly when such a claim is historical.[332] Such "clear and evocative" maps remain elusive, or at least the historical maps held as evidence for different territorial claims are contradictory. As a result of the disputed histories of the Ferghana Valley borders and the multitude of conflicting maps produced under the auspices of the Soviet Union, it is difficult to resolve contradictory claims for territory by relying on the maps alone.

While historical uncertainty may be exaggerated as a direct source of contemporary conflict, the Soviet legacy does play a prominent role in the biographies of

330 As noted by Megoran in "The Critical Geopolitics of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan Ferghana Valley Boundary Dispute, 1999–2000," 733.

331 Cummings, *Understanding Central Asia*, 19.

332 Yves Lacoste, "Rivalries for Territory," *Geopolitics* 5, no. 2 (2000): 122, doi: 10.1080/14650040008407683.

the Ferghana Valley borders. "The Soviet project," acknowledged Cummings, "while also retaining pragmatism and realpolitik, was nevertheless shaped by the ideological and deliberately transformative project, communism, and this set at least three new meanings for political borders of the region."[333] Cummings describes two meanings that are directly pertinent to the Ferghana Valley's borders.[334] First, Central Asia was absorbed into "the Soviet whole," setting the region apart from the capitalist world as distinctly socialist, and separating it further from the rest of "the wider Muslim world."[335] Second, Central Asia's "delimitation created five of the 15 Soviet Socialist Republics (SSRs), each of them bearing the titular name of the five Central Asian ethno-linguistic groups identified by the Soviet authorities and ethnographers."[336] Along with the five new SSRs, the new borders acquired new meanings. Borders in the Ferghana Valley, especially, "were given ethno-linguistic content…with all their contradictions."[337] These historical contradictions are evident not only in inconsistent maps produced during the Soviet era that failed to clarify the delineation of borders between the individual republics, but also in the concept of pan-Sovietism that increased interdependence between the borderland peoples. For example, shared use of water management infrastructure, roads, pasture and farming lands, as well as postal and education systems under the Soviets nonetheless eventually led to painful separations and divisions after independence.

Newfound political independence in 1991 challenged longstanding presumptions of political and economic unity in the Ferghana Valley. Megoran highlights this characteristic of unity within the general history of the Ferghana Valley, stating that, "although it has been subject to a large number of successive rulers, the Ferghana Valley

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[333] Cummings, *Understanding Central Asia*, 19.

[334] Cummings's third meaning pertains to western Central Asia and falls outside the scope of this thesis.

[335] Cummings, *Understanding Central Asia*, 19.

[336] Ibid., 19.

[337] Ibid.

has been under the control of a single political entity for much of its history."[338] The Ferghana Valley's economy is also highly interdependent; for one, agricultural lowlands in Uzbekistan depend on the westward flow of water, while hillside communities in Kyrgyzstan rely on the lowlands to graze livestock. Independence from the Soviet Union meant local leaders needed to confront not only considerable ideological and political questions, but also practical economic challenges. While the original Soviet delineation plan built on the "largely pragmatic" rule of the Russians under the Tsar,[339] the ethno-linguistic border divisions were never intended to solidify into permanent and independent states.

2. Independence and the Internationalizing of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan Border.

The Ferghana Valley's borders were internationalized nearly overnight.[340] The borderlands between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan were transformed into a space where state power and control could define who was "in" and who was "out." British international law scholar Rein Mullerson suggests that these internationalized borders are themselves sources of conflict between newly independent states.[341] As the Soviet Union peacefully disintegrated, all aspects of life were affected: administrative borders were upgraded to international borders, and political relationships between communities across borders were officially severed, while economic and social connections remained largely intact but fragile. The process of border internationalization was not a source of conflict in and of itself, but, combined with border hardening, it established a tension between political, economic, social, and cultural dynamics and state institutionalizing of the border.

According to Cummings, the general "reluctance to declare independence" in 1991 was the result of dual transformations of both the state bureaucracy and society

338 Megoran, "For Ethnography in Political Geography: Experiencing and Re-imagining Ferghana Valley Boundary Closures," 623.

339 Cummings, *Understanding Central Asia*, 38.

340 Ibid., 905–923.

341 Rein Mullerson, *Central Asia* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 48–49.

under Soviet tutelage, which left local leaders fearful of a future outside the socialist union.[342] For the Central Asian republics, identity and statehood were intrinsically linked with the ideology of socialism and the history of the Soviet Union.[343] In fact, the collapse of the Soviet Union from within resulted in the "creation of independent statehood by default."[344] Cummings further identifies the effects of late state formation: "many of the processes that elsewhere took centuries to achieve have been accelerated"[345] in Central Asia to dramatic effect. The people of Central Asia were "forced to come to terms simultaneously with a number of transformative, contradictory processes."[346] Sudden independence from Moscow necessitated simultaneous processes of nation- and state-building.

While the Ferghana Valley borders were not the only areas requiring demarcation within Central Asia, a complex set of political, cultural, and socio-economic dynamics drew specific attention to this valley's borders and its potential for conflict. As a result of the elevation of borders to international status at the collapse of the Soviet Union, the republics of Central Asia suddenly needed to address the challenges pertaining to border control and management. State capacity for border management, however, was minimal in the newly formed republics because no such need had existed under the political and territorial unity of the Soviet Union. The lack of inherited border regimes in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan and the slow bureaucratic institutionalization of the borders in the 1990s also coincided with international optimism about globalization, which encouraged national leaders to reassure populations that the borders would remain friendly. Advocates of a democratic "end of history" and open borders thought border hardening was a thing of the past. Uzbekistan's de facto international borders remained administrative in character throughout much of the early 1990s.

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342 Cummings, *Understanding Central Asia*, 171.

343 Ibid.

344 Ibid., 179.

345 Ibid., 171.

346 Ibid.

The five Central Asian states, along with their borders, assumed international status nearly overnight when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991.[347] In the immediate aftermath of Central Asia's independence, Graham Fuller observed that "huge questions about the future nature of relations among the old republics have yet to be worked out—a process that will probably take years."[348] Fuller's 1992 assessment followed multiple trips to Central Asia and Moscow between the summer of 1991 and May 1992. As described in his report sponsored by the U.S. Office of the Secretary of Defense, Fuller met with "numerous opposition groups and figures, Russians working in Central Asia, intellectuals, journalists, and an Islamic religious figure"[349] over the course of his multiple trips. With unusual access to prominent people in the former Communist bloc, Fuller also was "afforded personal interviews with the president and vice-president of Uzbekistan, the president of Kazakhstan, [and] a senior advisor to the president of Kazakhstan."[350] These multiple trips and Fuller's analysis over more than a year brought him into contact with people living in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Moscow. Fuller's pragmatic judgment that clarifying relations between Central Asian states would "probably take years" understated the challenge. After more than twenty-five years, there is still no clear sense of the "future nature of relations" between these sovereign states.

Moscow's control of Central Asia through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries promoted cooperation across state borders, including cross-border trade, coordinated infrastructure projects, common currency, and even shared ideology. Moscow was often called upon to mediate disputes between rival political and economic interests in the Central Asian states.[351] The period of Soviet control was another phase in a long series of outsiders controlling Central Asia, particularly in the Ferghana Valley. "Although it has been subject to a large number of successive rulers," notes Nick Megoran, "the

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[347] For a summary of the immediate post-Cold War impressions and optimism, see Graham E. Fuller, *Central Asia: The New Geopolitics* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1992), http://www.rand.org/pubs/reports/R4219.html.

[348] Fuller, *Central Asia,* iii-iv.

[349] Ibid., iii.

[350] Ibid.

[351] See Cummings, *Understanding Central Asia,* 43 and 135 for examples.

Ferghana Valley has been under the control of a single political entity for much of its history."[352] Certainly, the Soviet chapter of the Ferghana Valley's history would leave its mark: the effects of years of Stalinism, decades of Soviet-forced social reconfiguration, the suppression of religious practice, and communist economic experimentation did not evaporate in the summer heat of 1992 and the first year of independence. As Eric McGlinchey notes, the Soviet legacy has led to chaos in Kyrgyzstan and violence in Uzbekistan.[353] With Tajikistan embroiled in a civil war during the 1990s, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan were left to dominate the future landscape of the Ferghana Valley.

Beyond geography, the historical and political context is also important for understanding how people relate to their space. Reeves develops several perspectives that are specific to the post-Soviet territory of the Ferghana Valley, in light of a collective memory and contemporary challenges. Observers should consider, suggests Reeves, "the social and infrastructural connections of the past," especially "the spatial imaginaries" that populations in the Ferghana Valley maintain, "to make sense of the pain and pathos of gaining and losing citizenship."[354] This "pain and pathos" applies particularly to ethnic Uzbeks living in Kyrgyzstan but who maintain familial and cultural relationships across the border in Uzbekistan. Reeves describes the contemporary political and social landscape as a "radically variegated post-Soviet world of documentary privilege, where the color of one's passport can make a profound difference to your chance of getting out and getting on."[355] Recalling a "phrase commonly used to explain the (imagined) mobility of the past, *murdagy bir ele passport bolchu* ("in the past there was just one passport")," Reeves illustrates that some are at least nostalgic for aspects of the mobility and freedom offered by Soviet borders.[356] It is necessary not to reduce "such claims to mere nostalgia or the politics of regret," contends Reeves. Such a reductionism would

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352 Megoran, "For Ethnography in Political Geography: Experiencing and Re-imagining Ferghana Valley Boundary Closures," 623.

353 See McGlinchey's coverage in chapter 3, Eric McGlinchey, *Chaos, Violence, Dynasty: Politics and Islam in Central Asia* (Pittsburgh: University Press, 2011).

354 Reeves, Border Work, 138.

355 Ibid.

356 Ibid.

"ignore to the degree to which the Soviet Union was felt to incorporate, connect, and provide channels of mobility."[357]

The legacy of the Russian and Soviet-era control over Central Asia remains a factor on the economic dimension of the Ferghana Valley, as does the effect of the sudden change in the economic dimension of the borders between the three states in the Ferghana Valley. Sally Cummings describes how the states were "forced to come to terms simultaneously with a number of transformative, contradictory processes."[358] From the leaders to the rural population, independence transformed inter-state relationships and borderland dynamics. The initial spirit of cooperation did not last. Cummings describes how "an interstate system of payments has not been created, no mechanism for the resolution of disputes exists, and no efficient mode of compensation from gainers to losers has been formulated."[359] In the realms of their economy and security, Central Asian states "failed to co-operate,"[360] instead choosing paths of "national protectionism."[361] As the border between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan hardened in response to terrorism and security concerns, historical norms concerning the people, their work, and their territory also changed in the borderlands.[362] Borders became more than a cartographer's two-dimensional mark. They became strong points of control and negotiation for the new states, as depicted in Figure 2.

The regimes in Central Asia agreed for the most part to maintain the status quo of their borders after independence "with the exception of some unilateral border demarcation by the Uzbek regime."[363] The borders of Uzbekistan remained relatively open, "apart from a brief crisis in 1993 when President Karimov closed Uzbekistan's

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[357] Reeves, Border Work, 139.

[358] Cummings, Understanding Central Asia, 171.

[359] Ibid., 134.

[360] Ibid., 133.

[361] Ibid., 134.

[362] For an explanation of the specific process and history of initial border hardening between the Uzbek-Kyrgyz boundary, see Megoran, "The Borders of Eternal Friendship?," 36.

[363] Cummings, *Understanding Central Asia*, 62.

border with Kyrgyzstan to prevent Russian roubles flooding the Valley, in response to Kyrgyzstan's exit from the rouble zone as it introduced its own currency."[364]

Uzbekistan's historical context strengthened a sense of national identity apart from its neighbors. Even though Uzbekistan was still a relatively young nation-state, Uzbek history became central to national government appeals after independence. Graham Fuller noted in his 1992 RAND study on Central Asia that "Uzbekistan has a strong sense of national identity and the national self-confidence that comes with numbers, size, and historical importance in the region."[365] The connection of people to their homeland, layered with a sense of national identity, is strong when tied to their ancestors. The groundwork for this national identity and a sense of an Uzbek homeland were building even before independence, as expressed in 1973 by Uzbek poet Cholgan Ergash:

> So that my generation would comprehend the Homeland's worth,
> Men were always transformed to dust, it seems.
> The Homeland is the remains of our forefathers
> Who turned into dust for this precious soil.[366]

Expounding on these poetic lines that revere the "Homeland's worth," Robert Lewis insists "the sense of a primordial connection between nationalist and homeland is said to be as strong as that between nationalist and ancestors."[367] The national identity noted earlier by Fuller has been strong throughout Uzbek history, but independence brought new urgency for the state to define its population apart from other nationalities. This formation of Uzbek national and local narratives had a direct effect on the meaning of borders in the Ferghana Valley.[368] Although the importance of borders grew after independence in 1991, particularly for the national political elites, most borderland people paid little attention until the central government institutionalized the border with signs, fences, and checkpoints.

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364 Megoran, "The Borders of Eternal Friendship?," 43–44.

365 Graham E. Fuller, *Central Asia: The New Geopolitics* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1992), 25.

366 Cholgan Ergash quoted in Robert A. Lewis, *Geographic Perspectives on Soviet Central Asia* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 274.

367 Lewis, *Geographic Perspectives on Soviet Central Asia* ,274.

368 Ibid.

Understanding the government's perspective and the effects of independence casts some light on the development of Uzbekistan's border policy during the 1990s. Uzbekistan was initially preoccupied with the development of its bureaucracy and its post-Soviet reforms. Independence was more than a theoretical problem; it was a real challenge for the state to govern its people and territory. As Cummings observes, "when Soviet power imploded in 1991, these five separate Soviet republics were to become, almost seamlessly, the five independent states, providing both continuity (same political borders) and change (different political meaning)."[369] No longer united by socialism through Moscow, the Central Asian republics, in effect, embarked on new programs of state and institution building, while maintaining their former bureaucracies and their inherited borders. An article entitled "Achievements of Political Reforms," posted by the Embassy of Uzbekistan to the United States, describes the initial transition from Soviet rule as "the first stage of state building, from 1991 to 2000."[370] Just as the Uzbeks in the borderland were confronted with new realities about the borders, so too were officials in Tashkent confronted with the realities of the country's institutions and practical questions relating to its currency, time zone, postal system, and agricultural irrigation (since some of the system's mechanical pumps were located across the Kyrgyz border). According to an official Uzbek government history, "This was an era of immediate and essential reforms and transitional changes, which contributed to the development of the national statehood."[371]

As state capacity grew, the state interests and power also expanded toward its borders. Then President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan outlined the threats to security and future prospects for his country in his 1998 book, *Uzbekistan on the Threshold of the Twenty-first Century: Challenges to Stability and Progress*. Whether he actually wrote all or some of it, this book marked the closing of a discussion about democratic reforms and

369 Cummings, *Understanding Central Asia*, 19.

370 Embassy of Uzbekistan to the United States, "Achievements of Political Reforms," accessed 20 April 2016, available at http://www.uzbekistan.org/social_issues/.

371 Ibid.

the opening of the late-1990s narrative over "threats to security."[372] This book also offered an important perspective on official—or at least elite—views on the security threats facing Uzbekistan and the regional prospects for stability. Organized in two parts, "Threats to security" and "Conditions of stability and guarantees for progress," President Karimov presented his vision for Uzbekistan on the verge of the twenty-first century. Karimov acknowledged that "Uzbekistan is encircled by countries burdened with ethnic, demographic, economic and other problems," in addition to "such hotbeds of instability in the region as Afghanistan" and a post-civil war Tajikistan.[373]

Two primary questions established the agenda for Karimov's quasi-official book on Uzbekistan's security and future prospects for stability: "What does national security in its broadest sense imply for Uzbekistan? What is our vision of this security?"[374] Karimov then asserted his idea of "national security" for Uzbekistan, including "the basic principles of the indivisibility of security, that security implies a permanent process and has no limits."[375] Karimov's second assertion summarized his perspective on threats to Uzbekistan's national security. Specifically, Karimov argued that "Ethnic, regional and local conflicts and aggressive separatism in states cause the main threat to universal security." While Karimov recognized that this type of conflict "turns out to be a powerful instrument of political influence in the hands of some states, which seek to maintain and protect their own interests and zones of influence or to change the strategic balance of power in their favor,"[376] he argued that ethnic conflicts and "aggressive separatism" are both internally and externally driven threats. For Karimov, security and regional stability are clearly connected.

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[372] Islam A. Karimov, "Threats to Security, in *Uzbekistan on the Threshold of the Twenty-first Century: Challenges to Stability and Progress (*New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 11–81.

[373] Ibid., 6.

[374] Ibid., 5.

[375] Ibid.

[376] Ibid., 5. The reference to external powers is likely an inference to Russia and Chinese, among others, whose self-interest in Central Asia is neither aligned with other powers or with the Central Asian states. This recognition of a continued "Great Game" is a point Karimov suggests throughout the book.

Karimov also asserted the state's absolute prerogative for ensuring political, social, and economic stability through the elements of security. Karimov further reiterated that the primary "threats to security" of Uzbekistan and the region are "such phenomena as political extremism, including religion, nationalism and national self-isolation, contradictions of an ethnic, interethnic, local and tribal nature, corruption and criminality, and ecological problems."[377] These security challenges are not only interrelated but also dependent on the condition of state borders. As Karimov recognized, local conflict—including the civil war in Tajikistan and the fractious fighting in Afghanistan—spreads across political borders, effecting regional stability.[378] Karimov elaborated on what he considered to be a regional problem regarding "the border transparency between the Central Asian states," especially in terms of the ongoing "guerrilla war" in Afghanistan.[379] Specific threats included "armed militants" and "spill-over." Writing at least three years prior to the United States-led invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001, Karimov already perceived porous borders as a threat to national security. With the changes in official Uzbek concerns and deepened global concerns over terrorism following 9/11, borders became even more important as instruments of state power and security.

Different identities are frequently in tension within borderland spaces. Geographer Péter Balogh describes a dichotomy between the identity formed by the nation and that of the diversity common around most borderlands. "The border of a country can be a site where displays of nationalism are intensified to consolidate the territorial state," explains Balogh, while borderlands are also "zones of cultural overlap where the national identity and loyalties of the people often become blurred."[380] Balogh derived many of his observations from research on the historically fluid German–Polish

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377 Karimov, *Uzbekistan on the Threshold of the Twenty-first Century*, 7.

378 Ibid., 14.

379 Ibid., 18.

380 Péter Balogh, "Perpetual Borders: German-Polish Cross-border Contacts in the Szczecin Area," PhD diss., Stockholm University, Sweden, 2014, 40, http://su.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:708423/FULLTEXT03.pdf.

borderlands. Such historically contextualized and fluid identities of people in borderlands deeply affect the local attitudes about loyalty and the local perceptions of the state.

When Megoran began collecting his field observations in 1995, the Uzbek and Kyrgyz people along the borders maintained fluid identities as opposed to a strict sense of national Uzbek or Kyrgyz citizenship. According to Megoran, "this liminal space where nation, territory and state were not coterminous rendered nation–state building programs artificial, even absurd."[381] In the immediate aftermath of independence in 1991, the borders of the Ferghana Valley were "porous, and its social geography dynamically interconnected."[382] For the Uzbek capital of Tashkent, control of the borders was not the immediate concern when almost everything else—political and economic—needed to be redefined from the previous Soviet era.

While ethnic tensions and inter-communal conflicts occurred between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz before 1991 and through the early 1990s, borders were of little consequence until the Uzbek state could actually muster the capacity to control the borders. A process of border hardening, described by Megoran in his account of field experiences between 1995 and 2000, consisted of "the ominous construction of a new Uzbekistani customs post, a visit by boundary cartographers, and the recent exclusion of non-citizens from the Uzbekistani school which had forced the local Kyrgyzstani school to admit Uzbek children and open Uzbek-language classes."[383] The construction of a border management regime in Ferghana Valley accelerated toward the end of the 1990s, especially in 1999 when Uzbekistan enacted a series of border controls to limit cross-border movement in areas that were "previously porous."[384]

These examples of a nation literally building up the physical meaning of the borders between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan show the effects on the borderland people, much as the strengthening of national identities through nationalism increases the sense

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381 Megoran, "Ethnography in Political Geography," 631.

382 Ibid.

383 Ibid.

384 Megoran, "The Critical Geopolitics of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan Ferghana Valley Boundary Dispute, 1999–2000," 623.

of the "other," the "foreigner," and "them." As Tashkent affirmed its "political geographic order on such communities,"[385] the tensions within the borderlands also grew between local people. A typical narrative from pundits attributes conflict simply to ethnic divisions, but the borderlands are far more complicated than this one-dimensional view of ethnicity as the "defining drama of a Valley."[386] While the political aspects of the state also emphasize the ethnic dimensions of local conflict, and increasingly the religious dimension, these narratives must be analyzed in conjunction with the social and economic dimensions of life in the Ferghana Valley.

D. CHRONOLOGY OF UZBEKISTAN–KYRGYZSTAN BORDER HARDENING

Borders in the Ferghana Valley are unique because of their relative newness, as well as their agency in creating and distinguishing national identities during the Soviet era and post-Soviet independence. The Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border evolved from 1991 to 2009 through the process of border hardening efforts that included walls and fences, limited crossing points, restrictive visa regimes, and increased patrols by military and police forces.[387] The borderlands became a zone of securitization and criminalization. State and international efforts to increase stability in the Ferghana Valley focused on the demarcation and securitization of borders under a global norm for fixed borders and within the context of transnational security threats, such as terrorism and drug smuggling. The hardening of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border is considered by Uzbek officials and foreign interventionists as an important element of regional conflict prevention, consistent with global border demarcation and "fixing" efforts as well as security programs to counter international terrorism.[388]

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385 Megoran, "Ethnography in Political Geography," 631.

386 Megoran, "On Researching," 253.

387 See Madeleine Reeves, Johan Rasanayagam, and Judith Beyer, "Introduction: Performances, Possibilities, and Practices of the Political in Central Asia," in *Ethnographies of the State in Central Asia: Performing Politics, Anthropology Politics Asia Series* (Bloomington, IN: University Press, 2014), 15–17.

388 Boaz Atzili argues that the international norm of "fixing" borders perpetuates weak states, leading to more international conflict. See Boaz Atzili, *Good Fences, Bad Neighbors: Border Fixity and International Conflict* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 1.

Prior to hardening, the newly internalized borders in the Ferghana Valley were considered open. Consistent with largely "administrative and rather symbolic" Soviet borders,[389] several national leaders in Central Asia actually confirmed their intentions to maintain open and friendly borders upon independence in 1991.[390] Megoran illustrates the persistence of the social, economic, and cultural relationships in the Ferghana Valley's post-Soviet borders during the early years of the 1990s:

> Border and customs posts were established, but control checks were minimal or non-existent and daily cross-border life in the Valley continued almost uninterrupted. Social and familial cross-border links were very strong. Weddings continued to bridge the republican border, great convoys of cars and buses transporting dowries and guests. Border-area shrines (such as that located only meters from the boundary in Uzbekistan's border town of Rishton, Solomon's Mount in the heart O'sh city, and the Sahoba shrine outside the Kyrgyzstani town of Eski-Nookat) continued to precipitate significant flows of pilgrims at set seasons. Soviet-era bus routes persisted, and the economic crisis pushed many professionally (42) skilled people to utilize them in cross-border trade.[391]

Megoran's observations of the internationalized Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border infers continued freedom, despite state understanding that their political statuses had changed. Notably, the new status of the border did not restrict the mobility of citizens (Uzbek or Kyrgyz) on either side of the border. The relationship patterns described by Megoran were not the result of years or even decades, but often formed through generations of interaction within the Ferghana Valley. Megoran notes that even when control points materialized along the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border, these "control checks were minimal and easily evaded."[392] Cross-border relationships were central to everyday life before independence from the Soviet Union, a pattern that did not cease following internationalization.

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389 Timur Dadabaev, "Securing Central Asian Frontiers: Institutionalisation of Borders and Inter-state Relations," *Strategic Analysis* 36, no. 4 (2012), 554, doi: 10.1080/09700161.2012.689526.

390 See Necati Polat, *Boundary Issues in Central Asia* (Ardsley, NY: Transnational Publishers, 2002); Megoran, "The Borders of Eternal Friendship?."

391 Megoran, "The Borders of Eternal Friendship?," 43–44.

392 Megoran, "Rethinking the Study of International Boundaries," 472.

However gradual, the new statehood was changing not only the political structure, but the social and economic order in the Ferghana Valley through a "trick down affect" from differences materialized quickly at the national level. These differences soon affected the sense of difference in meaningful ways at the local level. Megoran describes how "the two republics slowly 'drifted apart' as they became increasingly differentiated in tangible ways."[393] These substantial national differences included a stark contrast in the political regimes, with Uzbekistan's "authoritarianism that differentiated it from the relatively freer regime in Kyrgyzstan;" the pursuit of "separate currencies" and differing styles of economy, with Uzbekistan maintaining the vestiges of its Soviet past and Kyrgyzstan aggressively "breaking-up of collectives and a greater diversification into cash crops such as tobacco;" and preference for the national languages (at least for official business) over the *lingua franca* of Russian.[394] Beyond creating immediate difficulties and marking the differences between territories, the new borders also affected shared opportunities for the future. For one, cross border educational exchanges decreased between research universities and schools that had previously attracted students from throughout the Ferghana Valley either limited students from outside the state by the mid-1990s or did away with quotas for Ferghana Valley foreigners altogether.[395] The more dramatic changes occurring at the state level eventually reached the borderlands, affecting the lives of its population and changed their sense of identity in some cases.

Most scholars identify a shift in Uzbekistan's border policies following the 1999 Tashkent bombings, in which the government implicated Islamic terrorists based in Kyrgyzstan.[396] "The conscious experience" following independence, in fact, "crept upon

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393 Megoran, "Eternal Friendship," 44.

394 Ibid.

395 Megoran, "The Borders of Eternal Friendship?," 44.

396 See Jim Nichol, "Central Asia: Regional Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests," *Current Politics and Economics of South, Southeastern, and Central Asia* 23, no. 1 (2014): 43–151, http://search.proquest.com/docview/1623534484?accountid=12702; Marlène Laruelle, *Migration and Social Upheaval in the Face of Globalization in Central Asia* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2013), 250.

the inhabitants of the Valley more slowly."[397] Megoran argues that it was not "until the events of 1999–2000"[398] that the people of the Ferghana Valley borderlands realized their full differences, for better or worse, depending on whether they were an Uzbek living in Kyrgyzstan, Kygyz living in Uzbekistan, or an Uzbek or Kyrgyz living in their respective ethnic homeland.[399]

The primary threat to state authority, as articulated by the Uzbekistan government, consisted of Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) strongholds in the Ferghana Valley during the late 1990s and early 2000s.[400] The IMU based itself in the Ferghana Valley as well as the Afghanistan borderlands, taking advantage of cross-border movement into Uzbekistan from safe havens in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Afghanistan.[401] Along with other events implicating either terrorists or separatists, Uzbekistan instituted a series of unilateral border hardening initiatives beginning in the late 1990s.[402]

Following the 1999 bombings in Tashkent, Uzbekistan initiated patrols along its borders and implemented a new visa regime limiting cross-border interactions. Figure 3 illustrates the sporadic fields of mines and fences placed along the border between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. "The boundary enforcement measures, both military and administrative, introduced by Uzbekistan from 1999 onwards," observes Nick Megoran,

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397 Megoran, "The Borders of Eternal Friendship?," 45.

398 Megoran, "The Borders of Eternal Friendship?," 45.

399 Ibid.

400 On Uzbekistan's response to IMU, see Shahram Akbarzadeh, "Keeping Central Asia Stable," *Third World Quarterly* 4, no. 25 (2004): 689–705, doi: 10.1080/0143659041000167893 3; and Olga Oliker, "Conflict in Central Asia and South Caucasus: Implications of Foreign Interests and Involvement," RAND (2003): 217, 231–234, https://www.rand.ngo/content/dam/rand/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1598/MR1598.ch7.pdf.

401 For more information on IMU, see Nick Megoran, "B/ordering and Biopolitics," in *A Companion to Border Studies*, 482; for the strategic security concerns related to terrorism from religious extremism, see Ramakant Dwivedi, "Religious Extremism in Ferghana Valley," *Strategic Analysis* 30, no. 2 (2006): 403–419; religious extremism, as it continues to relate to terrorism, see Bayram Balci, "From Fergana Valley to Syria-the Transformation of Central Asian Radical Islam," *Eurasia Outlook in Carnegie Endowment for International Peace,* 25 July 2014, http://carnegieendowment.org/2014/07/25/from-fergana-valley-to-syria-transformation-of-central-asian-radical-islam.

402 See Megoran, "The Borders of Eternal Friendship?."

"were principally justified in terms of protecting the economic and military security of the state."[403]

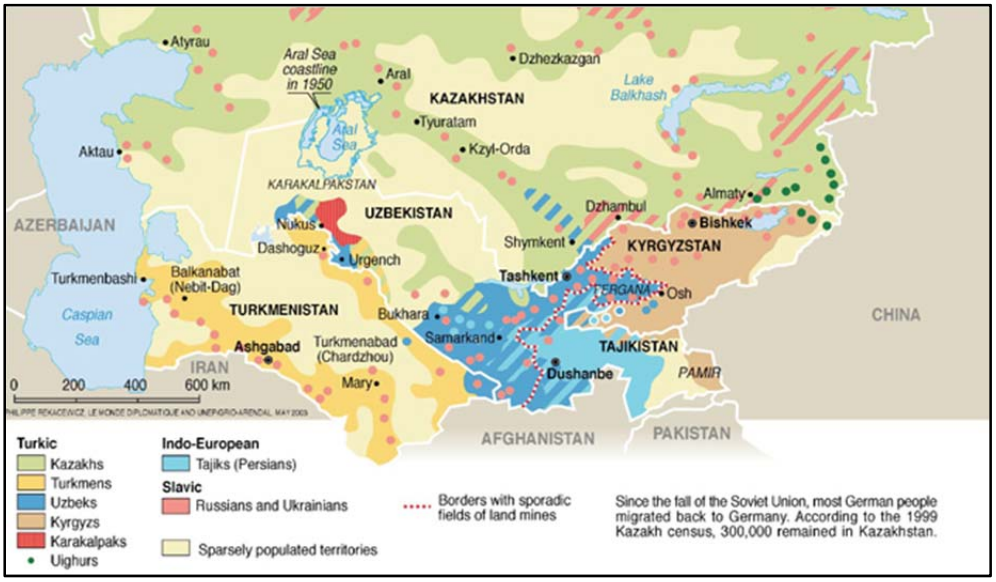

Figure 3. Border Fence in the Ferghana Valley.[404]

Construction of the first border fence by Uzbekistan began in 1999. Restrictions to cross-border travel followed, affecting more than 2.5 million Uzbeks living beyond its borders in neighboring countries.[405] Since the bombings in 1999 and the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan by a U.S.-led coalition, miles of fences and checkpoints have been established along the Uzbekistan – Kyrgyzstan border.[406] Uzbekistan justified these initial border hardening policies and practices as necessary for reasons of security and national sovereignty.

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403 Nick Megoran, Gaël Raballand, and Jerome Bouyjou, "Performance, Representation and the Economics of Border Control in Uzbekistan," *Geopolitics* 10, no. 4 (2005): 726, doi: 10.1080/14650040500318498.

404 Source: UNEP, "Ferghana Valley: Population groups," United Nations, http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/12973315352EEE3185257014005A0B8C-unep_POP2_fer300405.jpg

405 Marlène Laruelle, *Migration and Social Upheaval in the Face of Globalization in Central Asia* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2013), 250.

406 See Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly, ed., *Border Disputes: A Global Encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2015), in chapter by Isabella Damiani, "Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan-Uzbekistan: Ferghana Valley," 330–333, and chapter by Timur Dadabaev "Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan: The Sokh Enclave," 335–344.

Changes to everyday life were dramatic following Uzbekistan's initial hardening of the border. The numbers of "border guards and customs officers" were increased, "new control posts were built and existing facilities upgraded, and in many places crossings were closed, roads dug up, and bridges demolished."[407] Megoran recalls how several roads between Kyrgyzstan towns that were locally depended upon were severed by Uzbekistan's implementation of its borders. The fact that Uzbekistan could sever roads that were of strategic value to the livelihoods of Kyrgyz resident in Kyrgyzstan illustrates the level of interdependency in the Ferghana Valley's infrastructure, as well as the complexity of borders affecting the various enclaves and exclaves. Along with the border hardening was a thickening that extended beyond the immediate borderline. Thickening occurs when the securitization of the border extends inward or outward—not necessarily defined by kilometers or districts—to the extent that more inhabitants than ever before experience the enforcement of the border. Megoran explains that "a concomitant 'securitization'…of internal oblast borders and a reorganized policing and control of movement and transport within the country matched" the hardening of the borders.[408]

Local frustrations with the unilateral border hardening soon followed its implementation, as the effects on everyday life were aggravated by inconsistent regulations and a general lack of certainty about the future. "In spite of the employment of this range of technologies and techniques of control," observes Megoran, "the 'border regime' was far from uniform or predictable."[409] The policies flowing from Uzbekistan's capital of Tashkent were not uniform, changed regularly, and were also influenced by the local elites that sought personal advantage in the new border institutionalization. During his ethnographic research, Megoran personally experienced "ever-changing regulations" that "seemed to apply to pedestrians, buses, trucks and private cars over time and between crossing points" in different ways at different times.[410] Application of these regulations was also not uniform along the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border, with some

[407] Megoran, "The Borders of Eternal Friendship?," 46.

[408] Ibid.

[409] Ibid., 47.

[410] Megoran, "The Borders of Eternal Friendship?," 47.

points identified locally "as being easier or harder to pass."[411] All of these newly felt controls of hardening, implemented in a seemingly haphazard manner, "compounded the uncertainty," which played into the "proliferation of rumors about the introduction of visa regimes, tariffs on traffic, and even complete closures of the border."[412] Despite ineffective implementation at times, the hardening of the border and the changes in access were real for the people in the Ferghana Valley borderlands. Uncertainty about the future course of their lives—so dependent on cross-border relationships—and the perception of the border's arbitrary implementation created feelings ranging from mere annoyance to a readiness to commit outright acts of resistance. Resistance to the new border rules was sometimes as simple as smuggling food and clothing across the border to friends and shadow markets, but it also included cutting through the new fences and antagonizing the border guards.

The border hardening began in earnest as early as January 1999, increased following the February 1999 car bombings in Tashkent, and reached even more dramatic proportions in August 1999 with the Batken terrorism crisis across the border in Kyrgyzstan. With the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) already implicated in the violence in Tashkent, this "group of dissident Islamist guerrillas headed by Ferghana Valley exiles linked to militant Islamist groups in Tajikistan and Afghanistan, invaded Kyrgyzstan's southern regions of Batken and Chong-Alay from Tajikistan."[413] The porous Tajikistan–Kyrgyzstan border allowed the IMU to mount this attack with little opposition from Kyrgyzstan's military or security forces. The IMU attackers returned to "the mountains of Tajikistan by November" 1999, when "Uzbek jets mistakenly bombed the Kyrgyz village of Kara-Teyt as claims and counter-claims flew" between officials from both states and local residents.[414] The Batken events in late 1999 solidified earlier efforts to harden the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border with the addition of a "two-meter high barbed wire fence around large sections of the Ferghana Valley border" and

411 Megoran, "The Borders of Eternal Friendship?," 47.

412 Ibid.

413 Ibid.

414 Megoran, "The Borders of Eternal Friendship?," 50.

numerous minefields (identified in Figure 3). Karimov officially instituted strict visa regimes for the borders in March 2000. The strategy was that "new border and customs posts," along with "troops of young conscript soldiers from both" Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan "posted to patrol this vast area of mountain and pasture" land would "prevent future incursions."[415] Reeves states that "by 2005, the region was peaceful but over determined by a discourse of securitization and the need for a 'strong, secure border.'"[416] The state was no longer a distant concept for residents of the Ferghana Valley. Rather, the border institution was strongly felt on both sides of the boundary through its restrictive rules and physical materialization. Border hardening in 1999 and early 2000 effectively ended centuries of freedom of movement throughout the Ferghana Valley.[417]

There is one post-script to the events of 1999, identified by Megoran, with regard to the sequence of events that sheds light on the complexities of nationality and loyalty in the Ferghana Valley. A closer examination of the events leading up to the border hardening suggests that there were state motives beyond simply countering terrorism and improving security. As noted earlier, the official Uzbekistan announcement of the first border hardening acts in January 1999 included an economic justification, but this reasoning was quickly eclipsed by security concerns. The official state narrative presented in Karimov's writings and some local accounts are, ultimately, not consistent with the actual chronology of the hardening. In fact, the initial efforts began prior to the Tashkent bombings in February 1999. Megoran explains that not only had border hardening begun prior to the Tashkent bombings, but that the memory of these events was distorted and incorrect among many locals.[418]

Nationalism and the rapid formation of national identities following independence offer some explanation for this reversal of events in the local memory. More specifically, ethnic Uzbeks living in Kyrgyzstan have navigated complex fields of loyalties between their territorial state (Kyrgyzstan) and their national identity as ethnically Uzbek.

415 Reeves, "Fixing the Border," 914.

416 Ibid.

417 Megoran, "The Borders of Eternal Friendship?," 50.

418 Ibid., 251.

Contrasting the local memories of ethnic Uzbeks living in Osh, Kyrgyzstan, with factual events of the border hardening, Megoran concludes that memories have been mythologized with these competing loyalties by referring to some of American geographer Morgan Liu's observations while conducting research in the Ferghana Valley. Especially important for ethnic Uzbeks was their "sense of place in the political landscape," notes Megoran, "primarily with regard to their relations of allegiance to legitimate authority embodied in particular figures."[419] Drawing from the ethnographic observations by Liu, Megoran suggests that ethnic Uzbek elders remained primarily loyal to Uzbekistan's President Karimov, who represented "a figure in the classical Uzbek khan ideal," rather than the state authority of their actual citizenship in Kyrgyzstan.[420] This mythologizing about Karimov by elders resulted in a refusal, deduces Liu, "to criticize his closure of the border, even though it brings harm upon themselves."[421] As Megoran recalls, Lui's "informants justified the closure as a struggle against terrorism, reworking the sequence of events into a popular meta-narrative of a decisive Karimov taking necessary crisis measures."[422] Megoran is critical, however, of Liu's strong conclusions in so far as they simplify the complexity of identities for Uzbeks living in Kyrgyzstan.

The underlying relevance for this thesis, when studying borders and differences between groups, is to understand that identities not only matter but also are not homogenous. The complex web of ethnic, tribal, national state, and familial loyalties cannot be reduced to simple bi-directional lines that connect a person to a sense of authority. Attitudes about loyalty, respect for authorities, perceptions of winners and losers in border hardening, and perceptions about the legitimacy of the border are as complex as the multitude of identities in contention in the Ferghana Valley.

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419 Megoran, "The Borders of Eternal Friendship?," 250.

420 Ibid.

421 Ibid.

422 Ibid.

V. LEGITIMACY AND LOCAL PERCEPTIONS: AN ALTERNATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING BORDER HARDENING AND STABILITY

A. INTRODUCTION

Chapter IV contextualized the Ferghana Valley borders with the contemporary "danger narrative," the history of regional border making, and the basic chronology for the hardening of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border, while also drawing inferences about local perceptions of legitimacy as a result of the border hardening process. Chapter V builds on this understanding of the Ferghana Valley borders to propose a theory and framework that underscore the concept of institutional legitimacy during the border hardening process. Building on the scholarly research discussed in Chapters II and III—including the relevant concepts in border studies, the process of border hardening, and the basics of institutional legitimacy—this thesis now examines the effects of border hardening on regional stability, moving beyond the standard security analysis.

From the Great Wall of China to Hadrian's Wall in Great Britain, fortified political borders have long served to protect populations from perceived external security threats while capturing the imaginations of local and foreign populations alike. Hardened political borders are often symbolized in popular culture far beyond their original functional purpose. One example of this profusion of borders in culture is the Cold War's Berlin Wall, where art depicts various meanings of this border during its enforcement and since its collapse.[423] From literature to genres of music and film, local and foreign artists express their own perceptions about "the good, the bad, and the ugly" of hardened

[423] For examples of research focused on the meaning of the Berlin Wall in society through multiple academic disciplines, see Ernst Schürer, *The Berlin Wall: Representations and Perspectives, Studies in Modern German Literature*, vol. 79 (New York: P. Lang, 1996); for an example of popularized literature describing the dangers of crossing the Wall illegally, see Peter Schneider, *The Wall Jumper: A Novel* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983); for a popular spy novel stemming from the intrigue created by the fortified border around Berlin, which was subsequently made into a motion picture, see John Le Carré, *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* (London, England: Penguin Books, 2016); and for a glamorized account of the Colonel Abel and Francis Gary Powers spy swap in the divided city of Berlin, see Giles Whittell, *Bridge of Spies: A True Story of the Cold War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2012).

borders to convey stories to their audiences.[424] President John F. Kennedy's "Ich bin ein Berliner" speech in 1963 and President Ronald Reagan's challenge to General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev to "tear down this Wall" in 1987 were powerful political as well as cultural statements during the Cold War.[425] The Berlin Wall is also an example of hardened borders galvanizing strong emotions and perceptions.

Local perceptions of a border are not only an inspiration for the arts but also a health indicator of the relationship between state institutions and a governed populace. More specifically, a border institution depends on either willing obedience to a state authority or coercion by the state as a means of obtaining compliance. Perceptions of border legitimacy influence the extent to which individuals comply with border rules. Methods of border hardening are nearly always regarded as illegitimate and coercive in nature. When those methods affect the local population adversely, they weaken institutional legitimacy. Hardened borders are designed, constructed, fortified, and maintained for the purposes of securing, protecting, blocking, restricting, or ultimately, in some way, managing the flow of people and material moving between two sovereign states. As shown in Chapter IV, perceptions of legitimacy either reinforce or weaken social obedience concerning a border, thereby bolstering or undermining the hardened border's original purpose of securing or protecting against outside threats.

What makes people regard or accept the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border as legitimate? How does Uzbekistan's unilateral border hardening affect this perception of legitimacy? Beyond the standard wisdom that border hardening adequately addresses certain state security threats, the original research question stands out: *How has border hardening affected regional stability in the Ferghana Valley*? Considered together, these questions are sociological and philosophical in nature, related to concepts of authority, power, and perception, as well as social agency and individual action.

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[424] For a description of the good, the bad, and the ugly of borders, see John Agnew, "Balkan Borders: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly," Queen's University Belfast and UCLA, 2012, https://www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres/CentreforInternationalBordersResearch/Publications/WorkingPapers/CIBRWorkingPapers/Filetoupload,309461,en.pdf.

[425] Frederick Taylor, *The Berlin Wall: A World Divided, 1961–1989* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2008), 338–340, 396.

This thesis contends that the concept of institutional legitimacy should play a role in questions related to the hardening and fortification of political borders, notably with respect to regional stability. This thesis also argues that increased institutional legitimacy of a border will likely increase social obedience, which will consequently reinforce the legitimacy of other state institutions while strengthening regional stability. If logically valid and sound, the inverse of this proposition should also then be true: when institutional legitimacy decreases—manifested through negative perceptions of the border—then obedience is undermined, decreasing observance of the border, which then leads authorities to undertake additional border hardening to address not only security concerns but illegal border crossings.

For this reason, the undermining of the border's institutional legitimacy weakens the prospects for regional stability. When caught in such an escalating pattern of border hardening, the state's original policy intent—to counter security threats—adversely affects the local population. In other words, security concerns drive border hardening, which negatively affects the local population and its perceptions and thus weakens the legitimacy of the border. Bruce Gilley concludes convincingly that "a legitimate state is less dominating over its citizens because the legitimate use of power minimizes the negative consequences of power."[426] Similarly, a legitimate border institution is not only less restrictive but empowering socially, economically, and politically. When the border is perceived as illegitimate, the weakening of border legitimacy leads to instability in the border and an undermining of regional stability.

This thesis proposes a conceptual framework to analyze border hardening and regional stability through changing local perceptions of institutional legitimacy. Chapter IV provided a brief synopsis of local perceptions and attitudes toward the border. This thesis now considers the theoretical framework for conceptualizing local perceptions in relation to institutional legitimacy, security, and regional stability. The relevant components of border studies and the sociology of legitimacy are considered in relation

426 Bruce Gilley, *The Right to Rule: How States Win and Lose Legitimacy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 140.

to the basic assumptions proposed in Chapter I that emphasize the theoretical connections among local perceptions, institutional legitimacy, and stability.

B. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section considers the logical premises that are crucial for understanding the relationship between local perceptions and institutional legitimacy. Drawn from theories of institutional legitimacy and social action theory, these statements condition the methodological framework used to evaluate how hardening affects border legitimacy and regional stability.

1. Returning to the Premises: A Border Perspective of Institutional Legitimacy

The primary theory of this thesis posits that hardening of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border undermined regional stability in the Ferghana Valley by changing social perceptions of the border's institutional authority, weakening subjective forms of institutional legitimacy, and diminishing social obedience to the border. This theory is based on six premises introduced in Chapter I and depicted in Figure 4. These premises are the building blocks for the methodological framework applied to the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border when analyzing the effect of border hardening on legitimacy.

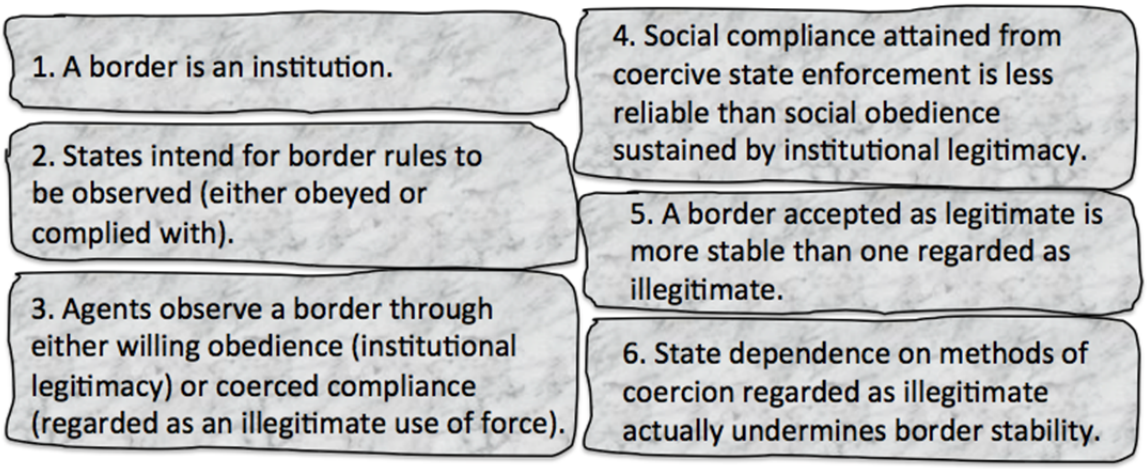


Figure 4. Six Premises: Building Blocks of Border Legitimacy.

The first premise described in Figure 4 is that borders are institutions constructed through political, economic, and social processes rather than simply natural monuments to irrelevant histories. Political borders, in other words, have historical biographies that describe how they were formed and within what context.

The second premise is that states intend their border rules—including crossing at designated points, following specific identification or visa procedures, and paying customs taxes—will be observed by the various agents who encounter the border. Agents are individuals at the local, state, and regional levels, including those within the regime's bureaucracy, among the political and social elites, and of the local population. Although all three categories of agents are important to border legitimacy, this thesis focuses on the perceptions of the local population because they are arguably the agents most immediately affected by the hardening of political borders.

The third premise parallels the point about state intention and affirms that agents observe borders under at least two conditions: willing obedience, associated with subjective legitimacy, or coercive compliance, gained through the use of force and incentives. These two methods are rarely, if ever, employed separately but are usually applied in some mutually supportive combination. Strong indications of obedience without coercive forms of compliance would suggest higher institutional legitimacy for the border. Likewise, when the state is highly dependent on coercive methods and the border rules contradict local understandings of a reasonable border, local perceptions of the legitimacy of the border are weakened.

The fourth premise proposes that agent observation of the border grounded in enforced compliance is less reliable than that derived from willing obedience. According to Bruce Gilley, "legitimacy best explains citizen compliance with state policies."[427] Meanwhile, "the opposite is also true: illegitimacy is the best explanation of citizen unwillingness to obey."[428] While compliance is obtained from coercive state

[427] Gilley, *The Right to Rule*, 152.

[428] Ibid.

enforcement, willing obedience is sustained by institutional legitimacy and positive perceptions of authority.

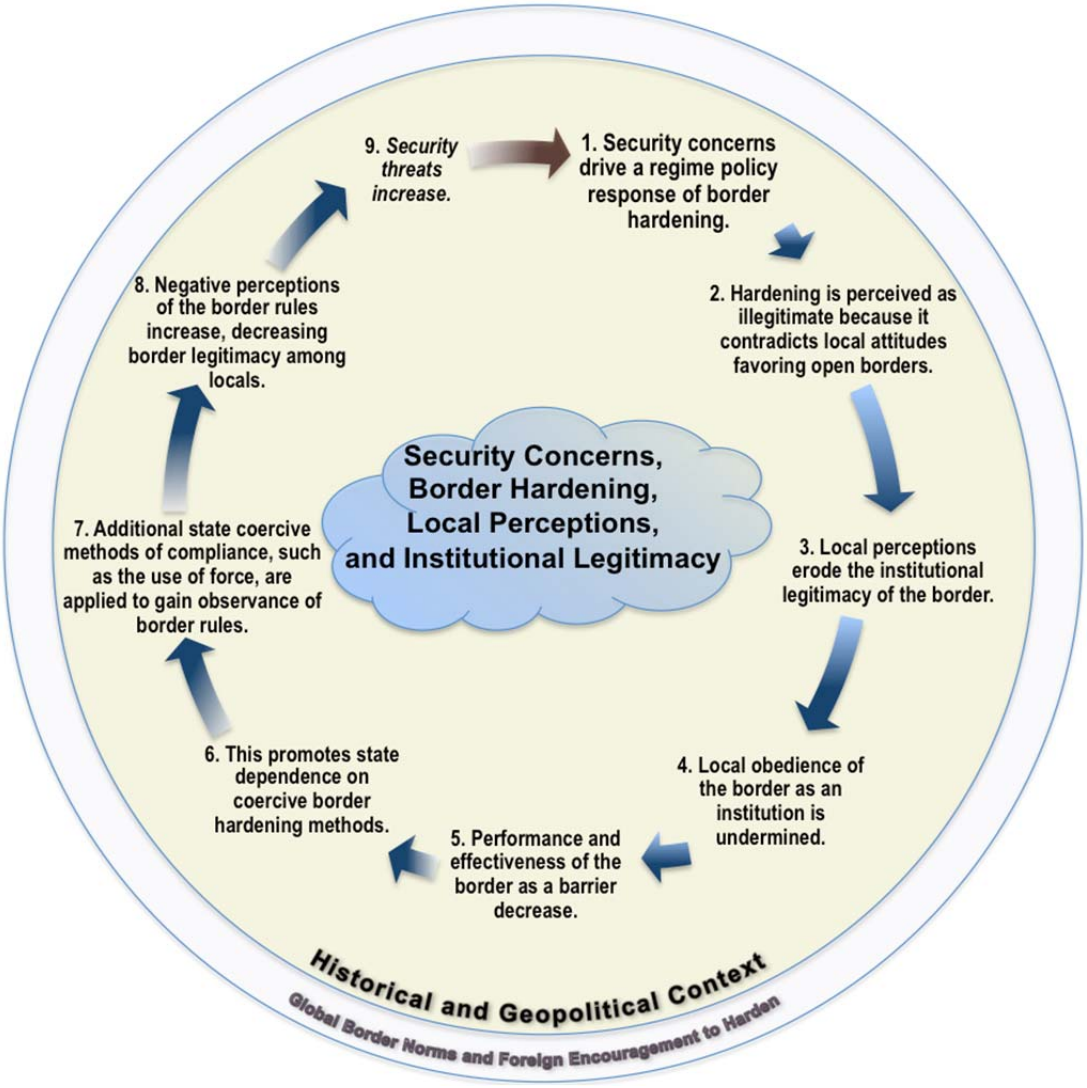
Similarly, the fifth premise builds on Weber's insight that rational-legal legitimacy is more stable than other forms of legitimacy. This premise contends that a border with strong institutional legitimacy, indicated through willing obedience and positive local perceptions of the border, is more stable than a border that is merely complied with and enforced by illegitimate forms of state coercion. Local perceptions of that border as just and right indicate a strong sense of institutional legitimacy, while antagonistic attitudes and perceptions of injustice imply a weak sense of institutional legitimacy. Perceptions of legitimacy are stronger reasons to obey than mere compliance through the use of force and incentives.

Finally, the sixth premise holds that high reliance on illegitimate forms of state coercion, particularly through the use of force and incentives, actually undermines the stability of the border. Illegitimate forms of coercion decrease institutional legitimacy and weaken the ability of the border to protect against non-traditional security threats such as terrorism.

2. Border Hardening, Legitimacy, and the Logic of Escalation

Depending on a region's historical context, hardening efforts at the border may escalate disproportionately to the security threats posed to the state, and ultimately undermine regional stability. The six premises in Figure 4 form the logic for the interaction among local perceptions, institutional legitimacy, security, and regional stability. When states depend primarily on coercive border hardening techniques for the enforcement of a historically open and porous border, local populations may grow antagonistic toward the border institution. People are more reluctant to obey rules willingly when they perceive an institution as illegitimate or unjust with its use of authority. Consequently, these negative perceptions weaken the border's institutional legitimacy, decreasing social obedience among the local population, and leading to additional state investment and reliance on hardening as a method. Originally aimed toward securing the border against external threats, such as terrorism, hardening efforts

may escalate and enter into a cyclical pattern—such as that depicted in Figure 5—that undermines regional stability.



This figure depicts the escalation of border hardening as a circular gear-like pattern (*l'engrenage*). The escalation follows a perceived erosion of border legitimacy in the eyes of the local population. This process undermines the institutional stability of the border, decreases willing obedience to border rules, and leads to additional state efforts to harden the border. The escalation of border hardening is contextualized by historically porous borders, global norms that delineate and demarcate borders, and a foreign "danger narrative" that has encouraged border hardening since the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States.

Figure 5. Border Hardening and the Logic of Escalation.

Starting with the security concerns common to nearly all states, the pattern escalates when border hardening overwhelmingly and negatively affects the local population (and contrasts with a historically porous border). Meanwhile, the local population continues to expect the border to remain open. What follows is "the logic of escalation,"[429] a pattern of additional state reinforcement of the border, decreased local perceptions of institutional legitimacy, heightened unwillingness to obey and observe the rules of the border, and increasing dependence of the state on border enforcement methods of coercion rather than institutional legitimacy.

Figure 5 depicts this pattern of border hardening as a cyclical process whereby the resulting illegitimacy "weighs down" the stability of the border. The lack of legitimacy reduces willing obedience, requires additional forms of border hardening when the local population becomes non-compliant, and becomes more acute by increasing local antagonism against the border institution. The state loses authority from legitimacy and must depend further on illegitimate means of enforcement. Under certain historical contexts of previously open borders—compounded by contemporary global norms that emphasize the securitization of borders—Uzbekistan's unilateral border hardening may result in an expensive, resource-demanding policy response that actually undermines the very border it intends to reinforce. The hardened border contradicts local perceptions of what the border should be, based on historical expectations, while foreign pressure and monetary incentives drive hardening as a solution to security problems that need fixing—a scenario compounded by the danger narrative described in Chapter III.

[429] Andreas, *Border Games*, 9.

VI. CONCLUSION

A. INTRODUCTION

> The great task is to discover not what governments prescribe but what they ought to prescribe, for no prescription is valid against the conscience of mankind.
>
> —Lord Acton, 19th century British historian and politician[430]

The preceding analysis investigated the underlying dynamisms of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border as an institution. Considering the historical and geopolitical context of the Ferghana Valley, this thesis contends that coercive forms of border enforcement through hardening are linked to regional stability through the component of legitimacy. Specifically, within the historical context and the regional circumstances of the Ferghana Valley, the unilateral hardening of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border may have delegitimized state authority, which necessitated further coercive border hardening practices that influenced local perceptions and behavior. Although further research needs to be done to evaluate local perceptions in more depth and variety, these critical local perceptions are indicative of low institutional legitimacy. The perceptions of suspicion and annoyance toward some forms of authority, feelings of unfairness and lack of respect for the border rules, and a sense of a systemic lack of transparency and accountability on the part of those enforcing the border all combine to ultimately undermine the border.

Institutional legitimacy of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border is central to the stability of the borderlands. Local perceptions of the border are a crucial variable to border legitimacy. This thesis contends that coercive border hardening erodes the institutional legitimacy of the border under certain circumstances and threatens regional stability. Although border hardening presents many ethical questions related to the use of force by the state, the primary argument of this thesis is that coercive border hardening—when perceived as illegitimate—may undermine the actual security-related goal that it is meant to address through unintended consequences.

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[430] Lord Acton, as quoted by Martin Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions, edited by Gabriele Wight and Brian Porter* (London: Leicester University Press, 1991), 106.

Chapter I established several premises for understanding borders in relation to the concepts of institutional legitimacy, authority, state security policies, and local perceptions. Chapter II provided the basic landscape for understanding borders and their dynamics. Chapter III explained border making in the Ferghana Valley, including the contemporary "danger narrative" and the historical context for border hardening as well as the basic chronology for the hardening of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan border. Chapter IV builds on the understanding of borders and the context for border hardening with the concepts of institutional legitimacy and observance of the border. Chapter V puts forth the theory and framework that are meant to conceptualize the relationship between border hardening and legitimacy when analyzed through local perceptions.

The historical and geopolitical contexts of the Ferghana Valley are important qualifiers to the proposed theory and framework. Along with the global norm calling for "fixed" borders in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States, these contexts inform the basic assumptions in this thesis, as outlined in Chapter V. The historical context represented a shift from open to closed borders in a relatively swift period. The Ferghana Valley borders were traditionally characterized as porous and open; despite being demarcated under the Soviet Union in the early twentieth century, these lines remained largely administrative in nature. The shift from porous and open borders of "friendship" to the hardening of borders occurred over a period of several years in the late 1990s, solidifying with Uzbekistan's 1999–2000 unilateral building of a fence along the border with Kyrgyzstan.[431]

This thesis hypothesizes that when an institution is perceived as a legitimate authority, the population generally complies with institutional rules through willing obedience. Such an institution is considered stable. When the state no longer fulfills

[431] For examples of the early open borders and the hardening process, see Megoran, "For Ethnography in Political Geography"; Megoran, "The Critical Geopolitics of the Uzbekistan–Kyrgyzstan Ferghana Valley Boundary Dispute," 746–758. There are also multiple books and journal articles on the effects of border hardening, including Reeves, *Border Work*; Reeves, Rasanayagam, and Beyer, *Ethnographies of the State in Central*; Jeff Sahadeo and Russell Zanca, E*veryday Life in Central Asia: Past and Present* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007); and news reports, such as Roman Muzalevsky, "Border Disputes in the Ferghana Valley Threaten to Undermine Regional Trade and Stability," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 11, no. 141, 1 Aug 2014, http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=42706&cHash=53b6bf8f36b41d6221ada47e0516dfeb#.V-hdR5MrL5Y.

popular expectations, over time the institutional authority of the state is delegitimized. People are less likely to obey or comply with an institution's rules or demands under perceptions of illegitimacy.

In the case of a border, such negative perceptions by the borderland people erodes the institutional legitimacy of the border and leads to at least discontent among the local population, but at worst, active resistance and violent opposition to the border and state authority in general. Border institutions depend on a mixture of willing obedience and coercion by the state to obtain social compliance. Coercive and illegitimate means of border enforcement may have unintended consequences, undermining perceptions of legitimacy and leading to a logic of escalation of border hardening measures. This may in turn necessitate increasing levels of coercive border enforcement in order to achieve social compliance. Perceptions of border legitimacy influence the extent to which individuals voluntarily comply with border rules. Methods of border hardening are nearly always regarded as illegitimate and coercive when they affect the local population adversely.

Between the intended short-term benefits in security and the long-term effects on stability, illegitimate means of border enforcement have unintended consequences. The logic of escalation becomes an *engrenage* or circular gear-like pattern that necessitates increasing levels of coercive border enforcement in order to achieve social compliance. When coercive border hardening is perceived by large groups of the borderland population as illegitimate, then the very border being secured by the state is undermined institutionally and politically, and its stability is weakened.

B. SIGNIFICANCE AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This thesis brought together research from multiple disciplines investigating the relationships involving border hardening, institutional legitimacy, social behavior, and regional stability. This thesis engaged the concepts of a plurality of disciplines by drawing theoretical and practical insights from geopolitics, sociology, and political philosophy, as well as history and the behavioral sciences. With its discussion of

institutional legitimacy, sociologists may find this thesis useful for its insight into resilience and borderlands. Political philosophers and behavioral scientists may appreciate how this thesis investigated the concepts of authority, coercion, and legitimacy in relation to institutional and regional stability. Historians may find merit in examining a border's historical development as a context for understanding changing local perceptions of that border, particularly through the "boundary biographies" advocated by British geographer Nick Megoran.[432] Human and political geographers may also be interested in the strong geographic dimension of this thesis, which uses multiple scales of society and politics and which depends on ethnographic fieldwork around a political border. Above all, this thesis proposed a research agenda that seeks insight into the long-term consequences of border hardening as it pertains to regional security. Additionally, this framework presents an opportunity for researchers in these fields (including border studies, legitimacy, and security) to collaborate with both state policymakers and the practitioners of peace who have their "boots on the ground" where the policy and practice of border enforcement are felt most: in the borderlands. This collaboration may also help bridge any divide between sound public policy and practical implementation in the borderland and thus encourage social peace and prosperity as well as a secure and stable environment.

The theory and framework presented in this thesis are ready for future research or ethnographic fieldwork in the Ferghana Valley borderlands. Analysis of local perceptions can include evidence based on quantitative as well as qualitative research methods. Beyond the collection of narrative evidence of perceptions or attitudes concerning the borders, future researchers might use surveys and public opinion polls from the Ferghana Valley. The political reality in Uzbekistan is, however, an obstacle to constructive ethnographic research in the Ferghana Valley. Uzbekistan's autocratic regime obstructs the collection of honest perceptions and opinions of state-run institutions, such as those governing the border. Research about autocratic regimes frequently depends on refugees, expatriates, or exiles, which narrows the sample to people that are not necessarily representative of the borderland population. Additionally, the majority of perceptions

[432] See Megoran, "Rethinking the Study of International Boundaries," 464.

collected by Western scholars stem from field research in Kyrgyzstan, which reports on the views of both ethnic Kyrgyz and ethnic Uzbeks. This sampling of only part of the Ferghana Valley's population is also a narrow view of social perceptions. While access to Uzbekistan's territory in the Ferghana Valley remains restricted for Western scholars, the perceptions of border legitimacy on the part of Uzbek citizens can only be inferred from what has been gathered mostly from the perceptions of their neighbors across the border.

Another aspect of future research could be the measuring of legitimacy through perceptions. Metrics for measurement could be found in the multiple definitions and conceptions of institutional legitimacy, including whether it is based more broadly on normative, subjective, objective, legal, or instrumental foundations of authority. Also, as Gerschewski suggests in his article "The Three Pillars of Stability," measuring legitimacy in autocracies is far more difficult than in democracies. Autocratic regimes rarely permit polling or public opinion surveys, and individuals could not be expected to truthfully answer such surveys anyway under politically autocratic conditions.[433]

C. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS

The simple recommendation to policymakers is to pursue means of border security that are not only effective (at least empirically) in the short term but also take into account perceptions of legitimacy for the long term. Perceptions of legitimacy apply to both the border itself and the overall means of its enforcement.

While there are many normative and financial arguments against building border walls or fences, this thesis cautiously suggests that coercive border hardening may in fact be counter productive to security and stability efforts because it undermines legitimacy and leads to a logic of escalation. Between the intended short-term benefits in security and the long-term effects on stability, illegitimate means of border enforcement have unintended consequences. The logic of escalation becomes an *engrenage* or circular gear-like pattern that necessitates increasing levels of coercive border enforcement in order to achieve social compliance. When coercive border hardening is perceived by large groups

433 Johannes Gerschewski, "The Three Pillars of Stability: Legitimation, Repression, and Co-Optation in Autocratic Regimes," *Democratization* 20, no. 1 (2013): 20, doi:10.1080/13510347.2013.738860.

of the borderland population as illegitimate, then the very border being secured by the state is undermined institutionally and politically, and its stability is weakened. As a report published by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) asserts, the "lack of legitimacy is a major contributor to state fragility."[434] Based on the reasoning presented in this thesis, illegitimacy is a source of instability in not only the border institution but also a potential source of challenge to the authority of the state. "State legitimacy matters," assert the authors of the OECD report, "because it provides the basis for rule by consent rather than by coercion."[435] This logic is relevant for both autocratic and democratic forms of government.

434 OECD, *The State's Legitimacy in Fragile Situations: Unpacking Complexity* (Paris, France: OECD Publishing, 2010), 3, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264083882-en.

435 Ibid., 3..

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   Naval Postgraduate School
   Monterey, California